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QUEEN ELIZABETH





HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH  
*(From the portrait by Philip A. de Laszlo, M.V.O.)*

# *Queen Elizabeth*

*Her Intimate and Authentic Life-  
story from childhood up till to-day,  
told with the personal approval of  
Her Majesty*

By

LADY CYNTHIA ASQUITH

SEVENTH IMPRESSION

HUTCHINSON & CO.

(Publishers) Ltd.

LONDON

Made and Printed in Great Britain at  
*The Mayflower Press, Plymouth.* William Brendon & Son, Ltd.  
1937

# CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. HER HAPPY NATURE—HER UNSELF-CONSCIOUS- NESS—A NEW CHALLENGE . . . .	9
II. EARLY ENVIRONMENT—GLAMIS CASTLE . . . .	19
III. ST PAUL'S WALDENBURY . . . . .	27
IV. EARLY CHILDHOOD . . . . .	33
V. HER CHARM AS A CHILD—EARLY TACT . . . .	39
VI. BROTHER AND SISTER—THE DANCING LESSON— "CALL MYSELF PRINCESS ELIZABETH"—AN EARLY IMPRESSION . . . . .	45
VII. EDUCATION—MUSIC LESSONS . . . . .	57
VIII. AN EARLY CONQUEST—GIRLHOOD . . . . .	65
IX. OUTBREAK OF WAR . . . . .	79
X. GLAMIS AS A WAR HOSPITAL . . . . .	85
XI. A SOLDIER'S DESCRIPTION OF GLAMIS . . . .	95
XII. FIRE AT GLAMIS . . . . .	107
XIII. PEACE—EARLY SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY . . .	113
XIV. SOCIAL LIFE—QUEEN ELIZABETH AT A BALL . .	119
XV. FRIENDSHIPS—FAMILY LIFE . . . . .	127
XVI. COURTSHIP—ENGAGEMENT . . . . .	135

# CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
XVII. WEDDING . . . . .	147
XVIII. THE WHITE LODGE—THE NEW PRINCESS—A ROYAL CHRISTENING . . . . .	155
XIX. A HOLIDAY . . . . .	163
XX. WORK—PRINCESS ELIZABETH—AUSTRALIA . . . . .	173
XXI. PRINCESS ELIZABETH . . . . .	183
XXII. SOCIAL WORK—CHILD WELFARE—A GIRLS' CLUB —CLEARING THE SLUMS—ROYAL ACADEMY OF DRAMATIC ART—ROYAL SCHOOL OF ART NEEDLEWORK . . . . .	189
XXIII. QUEEN ELIZABETH AS MOTHER—BIRTH OF PRINCESS MARGARET ROSE . . . . .	203
XXIV. A LONDON HOME—145 PICCADILLY—QUEEN ELIZABETH AS HOSTESS—THE HOME OF HER CHILDHOOD . . . . .	211
XXV. QUEEN ELIZABETH AT HOLYROOD—QUEEN OF ENGLAND . . . . .	221
INDEX	227

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH . . .	<i>Frontispiece</i>
	FACING PAGE
QUEEN ELIZABETH AT ABOUT THE SAME AGE AS HER DAUGHTER SHOWN IN THE PHOTOGRAPH OVERLEAF . . .	16
PRINCESS ELIZABETH . . . . .	17
TWO YEARS OLD . . . . .	24
QUEEN ELIZABETH WITH HER ELDER SISTER, NOW LADY ELPHINSTONE . . . . .	25
QUEEN ELIZABETH AND HER BROTHER DAVID WITH A FAVOURITE DOG . . . . .	25
THE DANCING LESSON . . . . .	32
QUEEN ELIZABETH AND HER BROTHER DAVID IN FANCY DRESS . . . . .	33
SIXTEEN YEARS OLD . . . . .	48
QUEEN ELIZABETH JUST AFTER HER HAIR WAS FIRST PUT UP	49
QUEEN ELIZABETH DRESSED UP FOR A CHARADE IN ONE OF THE COSTUMES OUT OF THE OLD CHEST AT GLAMIS .	64
QUEEN ELIZABETH AT BISHAM ABBEY . . . . .	65
GLAMIS CASTLE . . . . .	80
THE DOORWAY AT GLAMIS CASTLE . . . . .	81
A PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN JUST BEFORE HER ENGAGEMENT .	96
NINETEEN YEARS OLD . . . . .	97

# LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

	FACING PAGE
QUEEN ELIZABETH, AS THE DUKE OF YORK'S BRIDE, LEAVES 17 BRUTON STREET . . . . .	112
THE KING AND QUEEN DRIVE TO WATERLOO AFTER THEIR WEDDING . . . . .	113
LADY STRATHMORE'S WEDDING PRESENT TO THE KING .	128
THE KING AND QUEEN ARRIVE AT GLAMIS ON THEIR HONEYMOON . . . . .	129
MOTHER AND DAUGHTER . . . . .	144
PRINCESS ELIZABETH AT ST. PAUL'S WALDENBURY . .	145
THE KING AND QUEEN LEAVE FOR AUSTRALIA . .	160
THE FAMOUS SMILE . . . . .	161
QUEEN ELIZABETH WITH HER FIRST CATCH IN AUSTRALIA .	176
QUEEN ELIZABETH ARRIVES AT MELBOURNE . . .	177
QUEEN ELIZABETH AND HER BABY . . . . .	192
PRINCESS ELIZABETH WAITS FOR HER SHIP TO COME IN .	193
A REUNITED FAMILY . . . . .	208
OUR KING AND QUEEN . . . . .	209
A RECENT PICTURE OF THE KING AND QUEEN AND PRINCESS ELIZABETH IN THE CHARMING GROUNDS OF ROYAL LODGE, WINDSOR . . . . .	224
QUEEN ELIZABETH AND HER FAMILY . . . . .	225

## CHAPTER ONE





# QUEEN ELIZABETH

## CHAPTER ONE

**A**LREADY long enthroned in the hearts of her husband's subjects, seldom, if ever, has any Consort come to the throne so well tried and proved as our new Queen.

It is now nearly fourteen years since, as the "youngest daughter" in England's latest fairy story, she married the "King's son," and thus gracefully stepped into history as the Duchess of York.

At the time of her wedding she could scarcely have failed to appeal to the popular imagination. Whatever her appearance and personality, for the time being she became a heroine for whom the stage was well raised and brightly lit, and an attentive audience secured; but the very prominence of her position, the glare of scrutiny to which she was exposed, gave quite as much scope for failure as for success. Though beauty and charm of manner provide an admirable introduction, to give lasting satisfaction far more was required than her evident natural advantages. To her, as to every other young girl, marriage merely provided the opportunity,

## QUEEN ELIZABETH

though in her case what was made of the opportunity was a matter of wide importance.

Those who saw the young bride, as hand in hand with her husband she left the Abbey to walk through the long avenue of onlookers out to her new life among the cheering crowds beyond, were struck by the radiance and gentle confidence that shone from her flowerlike face.

From the very outset her demeanour, a happy blend of delicate dignity and radiant friendliness, conquered both individuals and crowds, and as time incontestably proved that charm, vivacity and grace were united to even rarer qualities of heart and mind, her conquest of the English people grew steadily more assured.

Her marriage at once brought great responsibilities, but so strong was her sense of obligation that even the searchlight of scrutiny to which it exposed her has failed to reveal a single duty or difficulty evaded. Undismayed, though fully aware of her undertaking, she at once showed her intelligent understanding of what may be called the profession of being Royal ; recognizing that it involved not merely the gracing of a feudal formality, but becoming in all earnestness a servant of the State ; and in this strenuous service she has never once faltered. Unassisted by tact, no degree of conscientiousness could have prevailed. It is the rare alliance of so many varied qualities in one ultra-feminine personality that has enabled our Queen to win and to hold the love and respect of the Empire.

## HER HAPPY NATURE

A naturally happy nature has, no doubt, greatly contributed to her success. Those who discharge duties joylessly may be very useful, but they are not able to diffuse happiness. Queen Elizabeth's gift for making others happy is, I am sure, largely due to the enjoyment that she herself derives from the exercise of this gift. The kind of politeness which is created only by the desire to make a good impression must after long exercise appear mechanical. How different with manners which, bred in the heart, owe their excellence to the unfailing and quite disinterested wish to make things pleasant for others. Had the Queen's manner while Duchess of York ever begun to appear mechanical, had she ever seemed to be merely acting a part, reaction would soon have set in. But since she still genuinely finds her own happiness in giving it to others, the world-famous smile still shows as spontaneous, as unscripted as sunshine. And that is why people still flock to see her passing by.

It is indeed remarkable that those who watch her preside over any function should still comment on the look of *surprise* in her expression. Most women confronted for the hundredth time with a staring crowd and a bazaar to open, a statue to unveil, or a casket to receive, might well look bewildered, but scarcely surprised. To her credit be it said that though Queen Elizabeth has never once looked bewildered, she still frequently looks surprised. Each time a freshly scoured and blushing child sidles up to her, she conveys the impression that she

## QUEEN ELIZABETH

has never seen, still less expected, any such thing as a bouquet. Can these lovely flowers really be intended for ME ? her astonished eyes seem to say. Thus each particular ceremony in her crowded life appears to be its climax ; each to-day *the* day up to which all others were leading. Whatever the occasion, the present always seems worthy to claim the whole of her serene attention. Showing no trace of being tired by yesterday or conscious of the demands of to-morrow, she never looks preoccupied, and thus never disappoints expectation.

It is an accepted commonplace to say that to meet any popular idol is to invite a sense of disillusion. But surely anyone who alleges disappointment on meeting Queen Elizabeth lays claim to a very lively imagination ? “ The camera cannot lie,” is one of the greatest lies of all times, and, delightful as are many of the Queen’s photographs, they may all be said to do her injustice. The reason they are misleading is that they fail to give more than a hint of her grace, and her charm of expression. At best no black and white so-called “ likeness ” could hope to reproduce the fresh, flowerlike quality of her prettiness ; and to anyone, however familiar with her photographs, who sees her for the first time, the delicacy of the colouring and texture of the fair skin, set off by the surprising darkness of the hair, and the intense blueness of the eyes, must come as a delightful surprise.

Much has been said and written about Queen Elizabeth’s indefinable charm. In all true charm

## HER UNSELF-CONSCIOUSNESS

there is, of course, much that must remain elusive, but surely in this case there is also a sufficiency of quite definable charm. Are not a lovely speaking voice and exquisite manners considerable assets? "Oh, what a polite lady!" was the delighted comment of a little boy after he had been introduced to the young Duchess of York. For a child to be able to distinguish what it was that pleased him shows a very definite quality.

Her contagious ease of manner and apparent lack of shyness owe nothing to the self-confidence of complacency, but result from a natural unself-consciousness, her unfailing wish to please springing, not from vanity, but from innate kindness of heart. Instead of wondering what impression she may be making, she concentrates on the well-being of whom-ever she is talking to. The artist John Sargent's remark, made after drawing her portrait, "She is the only completely unself-conscious sitter I have had," explains a great deal.

Queen Elizabeth is greatly blessed in being able to be dignified without ever being stiff. Hers is, in fact, not so much the ability to be dignified but the inability to be anything else; her innate dignity being no adjunct to be put on and taken off, but as inherent as the scent of a flower.

To turn to lesser things, in dress she shows skill by being always distinctive but never sensational, and the fact that she was one of the few young women who could remain unshingled without looking old-fashioned is characteristic of her personality.

## QUEEN ELIZABETH

Add to all these qualities a delightful blend of gaiety and seriousness, and the gift of an active as well as responsive sense of humour, and enough has been said to show that, besides the magic of indefinable charm, there are sufficient obvious reasons to account for her lasting success.

Readers of these pages will perhaps accuse them of bad advocacy. Where—they may complain—is the light and shade so necessary to any portrait? Unrelieved praise is monotonous. It is also apt to seem unconvincing. But since the sharpest searchlight of scrutiny has failed to disclose any what might be called redeeming faults, how was this regrettable sameness to be avoided? Panegyrics without salt are apt to be taken—with a grain of salt, but for the sake of protecting a biography from the charge of insipidity, it was scarcely possible to obey the mandate “season with taste” and invest a Queen with fictitious faults. Yet if my praise is unmitigated, at least it is not exaggerated. If no faults have been invented, neither have any virtues been magnified. Either to suppress or to diminish good qualities was not the task of a mere recorder.

Even in these feminist days there is still a die-hard inclination to consider charm and efficiency irreconcilable; and it is perhaps as a business woman that Queen Elizabeth has not been sufficiently praised. So far from being content to remain an ornamental figurehead, she has always insisted on going into the practical working details of all the organizations with which she is connected. Apart



QUEEN ELIZABETH AT ABOUT THE SAME AGE AS  
HER DAUGHTER SHOWN IN THE PHOTOGRAPH  
OVERLEAF





PRINCESS ELIZABETH  
*(Photograph by Marcus Adams)*

## A NEW CHALLENGE

from being conscientious, no doubt she realizes that the only way to dodge boredom is to exercise intelligence and take a lively interest in whatever claims her time.

The discharge of her duties towards the many charities and institutions with which, as Duchess of York, she was associated, turned her days into a mosaic of engagements.

And now an unforeseeable twist of history has again changed the whole course of her life. Fate has flung her a new and formidable challenge. Confidence in her determination and ability to meet this challenge worthily will, I am sure, be strengthened by a study of her character and her life. Let us then follow the story of this unself-seeking daughter of Scotland, who has thus had greatness thrust upon her.



## CHAPTER TWO

EARLY ENVIRONMENT—GLAMIS CASTLE



## CHAPTER TWO

THE youngest but one of ten children, Lady Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon, now Queen of England, was born on August 4th, 1900, at St. Paul's Waldenbury, the Hertfordshire home of her father, the fourteenth Earl of Strathmore. It has been pleasant to peer into so happy a childhood and inquire how far the promise of the flower was discernible in the bud. Few human plants can have been more favourably reared.

Lady Strathmore, before her marriage Miss Cecilia Cavendish-Bentinck, a cousin of the Duke of Portland, is noted for her charm. From all accounts no mother can ever have been more loving and more loved. Of her it was said, "If there be a genius for family life, she has it." To be the youngest but one of a family so large as to form a clan in itself is a bracing upbringing. It was in no artificial hothouse, but in the hurly-burly of big brothers and their big dogs that the Duchess learnt to walk and to live. The environment of her childhood was exceptionally picturesque; her father, who succeeded to the Earldom when she was four years old, being the owner of three beautiful country homes. Of these, the one most associated with the

## QUEEN ELIZABETH

family of Bowes-Lyon is Glamis Castle, in Forfarshire, which came to the family over five hundred and fifty years ago with Princess Jean, daughter of Robert II, who married Sir John Lyon.

Glamis is one of the names that Shakespeare has sent thrilling through the centuries, and though its connection with anyone so remote as Macbeth is but legendary, it probably is the oldest inhabited house in the British Isles. A forest of weathered sandstone, it rises from the "Strathmore," or, in English, "the great valley," a fertile plain lying between the Grampians and the heathered Sidlaws. For the building as it now stands, the first Earl, Patrick, 1578-1615, was largely responsible. Over the doorway of the central stairway tower is the inscription: "Built by Patrick Lord Glamis and Anna Murray," and the same Earl's monogram is seen on various parts of the walls. There were originally nine walls around the castle, and on the lawn in front of it two staunch towers, sole remnant of the first line of defence, still stand. Here there is also a wonderful immense sundial, with eighty-one separate dial faces on it.

A stronghold of superstition, Glamis Castle is the seat of more legends than any other home in Britain. The air seems thick with tradition, and the peaceful present overweighted by shadows of the grim past; shadows that have not even electric light to disturb them.

The huge circular stone staircase of this mediæval fortress is gauntly impressive. The oldest part of

## GLAMIS CASTLE

the building, it seems to belong to the dead rather than to the living. The immense thickness of its walls give it a vault-like coolness, and the solidity of its unworn stones has defied time and countless generations of mortal footsteps.

Tradition asserts that it was up these stairs that the wounded King Malcolm was carried, bleeding, to die in the room still called after him ; King Malcolm and innumerable lesser victims of fierce feuds.

And up and down these grim stairs generations of children have rushed in palpitating games of hide-and-seek. In spite of one's first impression, it is difficult to believe that so large and boisterous a family as the present one could fail to lay the most persistent of ghosts.

What other children can ever have known such glorious scope for hide-and-seek ? Besides trap-doors, there are mural chambers concealed in the thickness of the walls and secret staircases with access to the roofs. There is also a grisly-looking well (now filled in) that communicated with the vaulted crypt beneath the Great Hall.

I do not think Queen Elizabeth ever felt any need to have resource to the petition in the Scotch litany : " From Ghoulies and Ghostees, and long-leggity beasties, and things that go flop in the night—Good Lord, deliver us "—but however undismayed themselves, she and her brothers seldom neglected their admirable facilities for scaring visitors, and were all experts at the fabricating of dummy ghosts, whose



## QUEEN ELIZABETH

frightening forms they would lay out in the most eerie of the dimly-lit rooms.

Children delight in what a Socialist, gloomily gazing at Hampton Court, called "great waste of space," and I'm sure the vast banqueting-hall, now used as the drawing-room at Glamis, must have given great gratification to the future Queen and her brothers and sisters. It is famous for its magnificent vaulted plaster ceiling, finished in 1620, and its two great windows deeply recessed in the walls which are eight feet in thickness. In the middle of the south wall there is a fine fire-place, with two carved figures supporting the overmantel.

Of great interest, too, is the Chapel, which is approached by some steps from the Great Hall. This was placed under the ban of Oliver Cromwell, and boasts of a much-used "Priest's Hole," which is still betrayed by an unpainted panel. In this Chapel an interesting picture clearly proclaims the family politics, for the central figure of Christ is portrayed in the unmistakable likeness of the "Martyr King," Charles I.

The castle is, in fact, full of Stuart relics. In the entrance-hall Claverhouse's coat is hung, and a suit of clothes, a sword, and a watch belonging to Prince Charlie are still preserved ; all of which he left behind him (the watch under his pillow) when forced to fly hurriedly from the castle.

The bedstead in which he slept was elaborately worked in many-coloured silks on a background of orange satin. It is now quite beyond repair, but



TWO YEARS OLD



QUEEN ELIZABETH WITH HER ELDER SISTER,  
NOW LADY ELPHINSTONE



QUEEN ELIZABETH AND HER BROTHER DAVID  
WITH A FAVOURITE DOG

## GLAMIS CASTLE

Lady Strathmore has had a new one made, on which, with wonderful skill and industry, she has exactly copied the whole of the intricate embroidery of the original, and under the valance at the top she has embroidered the names of all her children.

In the room known as Sir Walter Scott's, the hangings of the bed are still of tartan. In this castle it used to be the custom to drape the bed of any visitor of importance with his own particular tartan, and in those days the self-respecting hostess was prepared on the shortest notice to welcome with the correct drapery any chief who might propose himself. Owing to this refinement of hospitality, the linen cupboards must have been crammed with supplies of all the tartans in Scotland.

There is no lack of competition, but undoubtedly the grimmest bedroom in the castle is one now unused, named the "Hangman's Chamber," so called, not as might be supposed because occupied by the public executioner, but because the last two persons to sleep in it both hanged themselves.

The following striking list of names is still written on the bell-indicator :

" Duncan's Room.  
Old Armoury.  
Hangman's Room.  
Prince Charlie's Room.  
King Malcolm's Room."

The dining-room now in use is vast, and here, during the childhood and girlhood of Queen

## QUEEN ELIZABETH

Elizabeth, at the end of dinner was still religiously kept up the picturesque custom of two pipers marching round and round the table, playing their wild music.

Nowadays the family all occupy rooms in a wing which was rebuilt in the last century. This wing overlooks the Dutch garden, and nothing less ghost-like than this part of the house could be imagined.

The present Lady Strathmore has cleverly contributed to the beauty of her home by the creation of a lovely large formal garden, designed by herself. This is entirely encircled by a yew hedge, and has two garden-houses at the top end and a terrace raised about four feet above the rest. In the middle there are four semicircular stone steps, faced by a fountain lined with minute blue tiles. This fountain is the centre of a fine herbaceous border.

The beds, which form intricate patterns all over the grass, blaze with flowers, and in the recesses of the yew hedge Lady Strathmore intends to place statues—one of each of her children.

All down the low wall of the terrace are beautiful stone-carved vases, with classical acanthus-leaf and other designs given by Lady Strathmore to local workmen, who have a cottage industry for stone-carving in every part of Forfarshire.

This garden was begun in 1907 and finished in 1910. The work was entirely carried out by residents in the parish of Glamis, and on a plaque are engraved all the names of the craftsmen, masons, and stone-carvers who took part in its creation.

## CHAPTER THREE

ST PAUL'S WALDENBURY



## CHAPTER THREE

ST. PAUL'S WALDENBURY, the house in which the Queen was born, was the chief scene of her nursery days. Except for three months of the autumn which were spent at Glamis, a fortnight at Streatlam Castle in Durham—another country seat now sold—and an occasional visit to London, most of her year was spent in Hertfordshire.

David Lyon, the inseparable companion of the Queen's childhood, tells me that for the first few years after his father succeeded he and his sister regarded "Glamis as a holiday place, Streatlam as a visit, and St. Paul's as 'Home.'"

No greater contrast to Glamis could be found than this lovely rose-red brick Queen Anne house with magnolia and honeysuckle rioting over its friendly face. Here, no historic associations, no legendary menace compete with the pleasant atmosphere of a happy English home.

This house is suggestive neither of ancestors nor yet of visitors, but essentially of *family*. The benign setting for a long succession of brothers and sisters, giving to each the freedom of every room, it reminds one of such comfortable things—of



## QUEEN ELIZABETH

schoolroom tea—home-made toffee, Dumb Crambo, and all familiar delights.

Few houses have been so thoroughly lived in. Here, one feels, were no very strict regulations as to the shutting of doors and wiping of shoes, no statements that dogs should be kept in their place (where, I wonder, is that place?), nor that children should be seen but not heard. In all of these rooms children certainly *were* heard: and as, after admiring all the scrapbook screens, you pass through the precautionary high gate of nursery tradition, the clamour of young voices seems still to linger on the air, and at every turn you expect to have to dodge out of the way to avoid the rush of helter-skelter children, racing to get out into the garden.

The nursery, recently often occupied by Princess Elizabeth and Princess Margaret Rose, is a real nursery, suggestive of precious, shabby, hugged-out-of-shape toys, and its high fender recalls comfortable dryings by the fire and the delicious smell of toasting bread. This pleasant room has not been subjected to the fickleness of fashion, its walls being still adorned by the old favourite story-pictures that were framed and hung up by the gardener forty-five years ago.

It must have been lovely to be a child in the surroundings of St. Paul's Waldenbury. On a summer's day the place has about it an especially delicious smell of country, and an insistent drowsy hum of bees and cooing of wood-pigeons. Lovely alleys of smooth green grass invite running feet, and in

## ST. PAUL'S WALDENBURY

the garden are a dairy, a knobbly oak too stout for six children's outstretched arms to encompass, peacocks of clipped hawthorn, ilex and mulberry trees ; every variety of rose behind hedges of clipped yew, and an ambitious and wonderfully successful rock-garden.

There is also a seventeenth-century pleached-lime alley trained in Latin mottoes, but *the* feature and fascination of the place is a wood laid out by Le Notre or one of his pupils. Merging into the garden, this small starfish-shaped wood of converging green alleys gives the most amazing illusion of being part of a large forest. Wandering in its shade, it is impossible to believe that you are still within call of the road by which you drove up to the house.

Of this home of her childhood, the scene of so many happy springs and summers, the Queen has a medley of memories. An iridescent haze shimmers over those early days, but as she searches back through the intervening years a throng of unforgettable sights, scents and sounds assails her. The shimmering haze receives her, and once more she knows what it feels like to be so little that the smell of hot grass is close to her face and very strong.

This is what she goes back to (so she tells me) : " At the bottom of the garden, where the sun always seems to be shining, is THE WOOD—the haunt of fairies, with its anemones and ponds, and moss-grown statues, and the BIG OAK under which she reads and where the two ring-doves,

## QUEEN ELIZABETH

Caroline-Curly-Love and Rhoda-Wrigley-Worm, contentedly coo in their wicker-work 'Ideal Home.'

"There are carpets of primroses and anemones to sit on, and she generally has tea either in the shadow of the statue of Diana or near another very favourite one called the 'Running Footman' or the 'Bounding Butler' (to grown-up people known as the Disc-Thrower). These statues live in cut-out grassy places, and sometimes there are wild strawberries around them, sometimes bee-orchises.

"Whenever—and this is often—a dead bird is found in this enchanted wood it is given solemn burial in a small box lined with rose-leaves.

"Her small brother David is always with her and usually a tiny Shetland pony called 'Bobs.' Bobs will follow her into the house and even walk up and down long stone steps, and she has to be very careful that he does not tread on her little brother's toes.

"Now it is time to go haymaking, which means getting very hot in a delicious smell. Very often she gets up wonderfully early—about six o'clock—to feed her chickens and make sure they are safe after the dangers of the night. The hens stubbornly insist on laying their eggs in a place called the FLEA HOUSE, and this is where she and her brother go and hide from Nurse.

"Nothing is quite so good as the FLEA HOUSE, but the place called the HARNESS ROOM is very attractive too. Besides hens there are bantams—whose-eggs-for-tea-are-so-good. Also Persian kittens and tortoises." . . .



THE DANCING LESSON  
*(Photograph by Lafayette)*



QUEEN ELIZABETH AND HER BROTHER DAVID  
IN FANCY DRESS

*Taken at Glamis Castle in 1900*

# CHAPTER FOUR

## EARLY CHILDHOOD



## CHAPTER FOUR

“**H**APPY is the nation that has no history.” The same may be said of childhood. The story of Queen Elizabeth’s early life is peacefully devoid of startling incidents. It is unpunctuated by any melodramatic accidents or illnesses. She was never either lost or stolen, neither, I regret to say, did she, so far as I can discover, encounter any gipsy gifted with the power to foretell her future.

It would be more entertaining if I were able to say that she was very naughty, but it would not be true.

There was plenty of what the tenants of Glamis Castle still call her “merry mischief.” This “merry mischief ” they are not likely to forget, for many of them spent considerable time tied by string to fences and trees. Sacrifices to realism, they were greatly contributing to the joys of the game of Red Indians. Visitors too were often startled by cascades of water descending from above, followed by triumphant peals of laughter from a child concealed on the roof.

Her brother David tells me that he and his sister once decided to run away, and laid in a store of



## QUEEN ELIZABETH

emergency provisions. But as their mother has no recollection of this incident, I gather that they cannot have run very far. On one occasion, proudly remembered, they gave a chauffeur palpitations by placing a football directly in front of one of the front wheels of the car. As the car started the football burst with a terrific explosion.

But amongst the inevitable pranks of able-bodied childhood, search as I will, I regret to say that I can find only *one* on which the dignity of the name of crime can possibly be conferred. This crime was perpetrated when she was six years old, and the culprit confessed.

Wriggling into the arms of a favourite visitor, she whispered, "I have been *so* naughty. I'll tell you, but you must promise not to tell mother before I do."

*Visitor* : "What have you done, Elizabeth ? "

*Culprit* : (with wan pride) : "I have taken the pair of scissors Mother has just given me and cut up all my new sheets in strips."

*Visitor* : "What will Mother say when you tell her ? "

*Culprit* : "Oh ! Elizabeth !"—which was precisely all that Lady Strathmore did say !

It's regrettable, but truth must be told, and in spite of this scissor crime I am afraid it is impossible to claim for my heroine the title of a naughty child.

The proof of this is that one of her governesses, a woman by no means easy to please, could only

## EARLY CHILDHOOD

find one complaint to make against this pupil. It was that "her hands were too small!"

Except for a somewhat excessive appreciation of chocolate cake, it does not appear that Queen Elizabeth even had the pleasure of being really greedy.

Of tears I can find very few traces, though no doubt sufficient were shed each time her youngest brother David returned to school. The other occasions on which they appear to have flowed fastest were three :

(1) When one set in authority found it expedient to chastise the beloved David with a hunting-crop. The tender-hearted sister sat up in bed and sobbed, although the crop was never handled with enough skill to check the victim's peals of laughter.

(2) When a beloved bullfinch, called Bobby, who for many years had fed off her plate at meals, was discovered dead—murdered by a cat. Her brother tells me how she placed poor Bobby in a cedar-wood pencil-box and reverently laid him to rest in a deep grave, tearfully solemnizing an interminable funeral service entirely of her own composition.

(3) (This was a very bitter occasion.) She and her brother had bought two beautiful Berkshire pigs—very clean and black and enticing. These pets were christened Lucifer and Emma, and were cherished for several months. One day Lucifer was forcibly removed to furnish the prize for a raffle at a local bazaar. The horrified children broke open their saving boxes and succeeded in

## QUEEN ELIZABETH

buying up about half of the tickets. But all in vain! Lucifer was won by a stranger, and passed out of their loving care.

Of vanity I can find no record. The only time when she appears to have been puffed up with pride was when stung by a bee. Flushed with elation, she rushed about shouting: "Clever me! Clever me! Me's got a sting in my chin—a whole sting in my chin! Would anyone like to take it out?"

Alas! No one can tell me of any huffs, rages, sulks, tantrums, dumps, or doldrums, so I must assume that none there were. Certainly those in charge of the Lady Elizabeth seem to have found it agreeable to remain. Clara Cooper Knight came as her nurse when she was a month old and stayed till she was eleven, and she it is who is now nurse to the Princess Elizabeth. She remembers the Queen as "an exceptionally happy, easy baby: crawling early, running at thirteen months and speaking very young."

When Clara Cooper Knight left, Clara MacClean followed as children's maid, and she is still with the Queen as lady's maid.

"Lady Elizabeth always makes everyone so happy," was her excellent reason for staying.

## CHAPTER FIVE

HER CHARM AS A CHILD—EARLY TACT



## CHAPTER FIVE

THE charm, vivacity, consideration for others and grace of manner for which Queen Elizabeth is now celebrated, showed themselves very early. Though full of enjoyment of all that children enjoy, she was always fond of her elders, and no child can ever have left more vivid impressions on grown-up people. Many declare themselves to have been "enslaved beyond release," and all agree that she "radiated charm." From all I can gather the child was the miniature of the woman. Curiously enough, her demure grace and dainty dignity early earned her the nickname, universally used, of "Princess Elizabeth," and it was to her that Mrs. Andrew Lang dedicated her delightful book *Princess and Princesses*. Her famous social instinct showed itself in babyhood. She lisped civilities, and before she could speak plainly knew how to put others at their ease.

Imagine her, still at the stage of having to bring both feet in turn upon the same step, busily conducting guests upstairs to show them their rooms! In fact, she appears to have played the perfect hostess quite as soon as she was able to play Ring-a-ring-a-Roses. At an incredibly early age, her

## QUEEN ELIZABETH

mother found her pouring out tea (for which she had rung herself) and making small talk to a large party of neighbours who had arrived too soon.

“ Shall us sit and talk ? ” the three-years’ child said to a distinguished visitor, gently but firmly detaching him from the rest of the party and leading him into one of the little rooms off the drawing-room, and there they *did* sit and talk for three-quarters of an hour.

In earliest infancy she spoke with a delicious, quaint precision. Unlike those of most children, her remarks were usually about *other* people.

When she was three she delighted Mr. Ralston, who for forty-five years had been factor on the estate, by saying : “ How do you do, Mr. Ralston ? I haven’t seen you look so well, not for years and years, but I am sure you will be sorry to know that Lord Strathmore has got the toothache.”

Early signs were also given of the housewifely instinct. A frequent and welcome visitor in the busy stillroom, she said one day : “ If you *could* make the pats of butter a little smaller, it would be much better. Persons leave some of the big pats on their plates and that is very waste.”

Neither was the pantry neglected. Here she was in the habit of coming to levy pennies with which to buy sweets. “ May I have silver pennies this time ? ” she once gently enquired.

A frequent visitor at Glamis wrote to me : “ Elizabeth was always the most astonishing child for knowing the right thing to say. One day, when

## EARLY TACT

she was seven, my daughters were consulting as to the best method of dealing with a very difficult guest. "Oh! I know!" exclaimed one at last. "Let's ask Elizabeth. She can talk to *anyone*."

All agree as to the remarkable tact shown in early childhood. Had she been consciously rehearsing for her future position she could scarcely have practised her manners more assiduously: but then, as now, their excellence was due, not to the desire to win praise, but to the instinct to make others comfortable. Thus, being perfectly spontaneous and not a means to an end, her good behaviour never gave offence even to those sternest of critics, other children.

Her precocious sense of fitness must, however, sometimes have been hampering to so lively a child. For instance, when she knocked at the stillroom door and said: "May I come in and eat more—*much* more of that chocolate cake than I liked to eat while it was upstairs?"

In spite of diligent efforts I can only discover one occasion on which she slightly embarrassed her parents. Lady Nina Balfour, a great friend of the family, had just come into the room. "We haven't had no presents lately, Elizabeth," David Lyon remarked to his sister.

"No," said she cheerfully. "But perhaps we shall have some big ones now Nina has come to London."

"Are you engaged, Elizabeth?" enquired a visitor. "No, not yet. It was only Mother what gave me this ring."



## QUEEN ELIZABETH

Lady Strathmore considers the following the most characteristic of her daughter's baby sayings. Two people were talking together, unaware that Lady Elizabeth, then five years old, was in the room. "How sad to think," said one, "that poor X. will only be married for his position and money." "Perhaps," said a small voice, faintly tinged with reproach, "perhaps some one will marry him 'cos she loves him."

The Queen is now an admirable letter-writer, but of any literary efforts she may have made as a child only one has been preserved. The other day she found in an old copy-book the beginning of an essay.

It was entitled *The Sea*, and started: "Some governess are nice and some *are not*." That was all.

## CHAPTER SIX

BROTHER AND SISTER—THE DANCING LESSON—“CALL  
MYSELF PRINCESS ELIZABETH ” — AN EARLY  
IMPRESSION



## CHAPTER SIX

**T**HERE was only a difference of fifteen months between the Queen and her brother David, and, as they were considerably younger than any other members of the family, the "two Benjamins," as Lady Strathmore called them, had the nursery to themselves, and were inseparable. The little boy followed his protective sister like a shadow, and when visitors were about she always preceded him into the room. "David's rather shy," she would say, editing him with tender apology.

Many people were laid under the spell of these two children.

Mrs. Thompson, a faithful friend of the family, and in their service as housekeeper from 1886 to 1915, wrote when the Queen was Duchess of York :

"They were the dearest little couple I have ever seen, and the Duchess always took the lead. She would come tripping down the stairs and it would be : ' Mrs. Thompson, have you any of those nice creams left for us ? ' and she would herself open the cupboard and help herself to what she liked best.

"I remember the Duchess inviting me to play cricket with them. She had great fun at me as I

## QUEEN ELIZABETH

could not send the ball anywhere near the wicket. She was a merry child and always friendly. I can see her now coming outside the window of the house-keeper's room with her pony Bobs, and making him beg for sugar, and often she would come up by herself and pop her head up suddenly and make us all jump, at which she would have a good laugh ; she had a very happy childhood, and always good health to enjoy it. I used to love to watch her movements. She and her brother were like little fairies dancing about."

In the dairy at Glamis there are also happy recollections of this inseparable pair. They used to approach by the wood and burst in covered with feathers they had picked up and, with threats of scalping, extort a drink of milk and a biscuit.

The most enchanting impression left on the memories of the many visitors who delighted in these two children was made by their dancing lessons with Mr. Neal, a great character who had played the fiddle for fifty years (that side of his beard against which he pressed his instrument was quite worn away). He skipped round the room after the children as he played, but if his limbs were frisky, his countenance was very solemn, and his seriousness imparted itself to the children, who went through their steps with aglavity only broken by their pleased smiles and rip ping laughter when applause greeted them at the end.

Their only grievance against their mother was when she made them dance a minuet at some



SIXTEEN YEARS OLD  
*(Photograph by Marion Neilson)*



QUEEN ELIZABETH JUST AFTER HER HAIR WAS  
FIRST PUT UP

*(Photograph by Lafayette)*

## THE DANCING LESSON

entertainment given at Glamis. Fond as they were of dancing and of fancy dress, the publicity of so large an audience was not to their taste.

For this performance Lady Strathmore made for her daughter a lovely long dress of rose-pink and silver, of the period of James I, and David Lyon wore one of the treasures of the dressing-up chest, the parti-coloured dress of the family jester, with cap and bells.

In his account of a visit to the Castle when he was minister of Glamis, Mr. Stirton, now minister of Craithie and Chaplain to the King at Balmoral, tells of the charm of these children's dancing.

"Entering the Castle by the low main doorway which still displays the huge knocker date 1689, and passing the 'yett' of massive iron from which, as Sir Walter Scott said, one might have imagined Lady Macbeth (with the form and feature of Siddons) issuing forth to receive King Duncan, I mounted the great stone staircase and entered the drawing-room, which in former times was the banqueting-hall, the splendid apartment which Earl Patrick described in his diary, still preserved at the Castle, as a 'room which I have ever loved.'

"Here, amid these surroundings, so full of historical associations, I was kindly greeted by the Countess of Strathmore and other members of the family assembled there. After some general conversation the Countess sat down at the piano and played a few bars of a quaint old minuet. Suddenly, as if by a magician's touch, two little



## QUEEN ELIZABETH

figures seemed to rise from the floor and dance, with admirable precision and grace, the stately measure so characteristic of the eighteenth century. These little children were the Hon. David Lyon and Lady Elizabeth Lyon, the youngest son and daughter of the house.

“The former had donned part of the dress of the family jester and the latter had assumed the robe and cap of a little girl of the period of James I and VI. Surely never was there such a setting for so bright and fascinating a scene. The lofty rooms, the historic surroundings, the dresses of a bygone period, the quaint music, so suggestive of Purcell and his formal school, all combined to form a scene which could not readily be forgotten. As the dance proceeded the glamour and illusion seemed to increase. Was it reality, or had the psychic influence of historic Glamis clouded the mind and conjured up a scene to delude the senses? No ‘crystal ball’ experience could have been more effective.

“For one brief, yet supreme, half-hour the seventeenth and the twentieth centuries were one. New reveries were forming, leading to others still more historically suggestive and alluring, when suddenly the music stopped and the little dancers, making a low bow and curtsy, clapped their hands with delight, and in this way brought the minds of all back to present-day reality.

“Little choruses of praise were heard on every side, and Lady Elizabeth, on being asked by the

## “ CALL MYSELF PRINCESS ELIZABETH ”

writer the name of the character she had adopted, said with great *empressement* : “ I call myself the Princess Elizabeth.”

Mr. Stirton has other recollections of the Queen’s childhood.

“ She was particularly fond of coming up to see my collection of family relics and curios, and showed a wonderful knowledge of these things for so little a child. I have a note from her, written at a very early age, in which she asks if she and her governess might come up and see my ‘ objays d’art,’ as she calls them. She was particularly fascinated by my portrait of Prince Charles Edward, and always went up to it and gazed at it. She also wanted very much to go down into the burial vault of her ancestors, but I drew the line at that. She spoke a great deal about her little brother David, and always said, ‘ He is such a darling.’ ”

This “ darling bruvver ” writes that he “ can always remember his sister being a most unselfish person and a most enchanting companion.” His only complaint was her proficiency at lessons. “ She was very quick at learning and always left me far behind, to the despair of the teachers.”

He, too, has vivid memories of the charms of the building the Queen has enshrined in her memory as the “ Flea House.” “ A great resort of ours was an old and half-ruined Brew-house at St. Paul’s Waldenbury. This attic could only be reached by a very rotten ladder, the rungs of which would certainly have broken if an adult had

## QUEEN ELIZABETH

attempted the ascent. Consequently our nurse was unable to come up and retrieve us. The attic was considered our very own parlour, though I must admit that a good many fleas intruded. In it we kept a regular store of forbidden delicacies, acquired by devious devices. This store consisted of apples, oranges, sugar, sweets, slabs of chocolate Meunier, matches and packets of Woodbines. Many other things there were besides, and to this blissful retreat we used, between the ages of five and six, to have recourse whenever it seemed an agreeable plan to escape our morning lessons."

He also vividly remembers the thrill of early dissipations. "Once a year we were taken to the Drury Lane pantomime, where we sat enthralled from start to finish, usually with insufferable headaches from the unaccustomed glare."

And later on, after school had claimed him: "During the holidays my sister and I used to go to theatres as often as we were allowed—usually in the cheaper seats, as our purses never bulged. She had a wide taste in plays, but I think Barrie's were her favourites, though Shakespeare was by no means slighted."

As I never saw them as children, I will add an impression of them, kindly written for this book by a very old friend of the family.

"The Lyon family have lived for six hundred years at Glamis, but, in spite of its great architectural beauty, I associate the childhood of Queen Elizabeth less with her Scottish than with her

## AN EARLY IMPRESSION

more modest English home. The overwhelming size of Glamis dwarfs human beings seen against its vast bulk, and the inevitable severity of a grim mediæval fortress, however picturesque it may be, seems an inappropriate setting for so dainty and fascinating a child as Her Majesty was in the glory of her early youth. Glamis is less a setting than a background, and a background overweighted with the memories of countless centuries.

“About St. Paul’s Waldenbury, her Hertfordshire home, there lingers a faint fragrance, like a whiff of potpourri of the eighteenth century. The red-brick Queen Anne house—with its pleached walks, its moss-grown statues, its fountains, its garden temples and its three converging avenues, cut through the wood in French fashion, either by Le Nôtre himself or by one of his pupils, each avenue leading the eye to some culminating point; here the tower of the village church; there two large statues—seems at once remote from our own period and also unstained by memories of old feuds and bloodshed, and forms thus to my mind a more fitting frame for happy youth.

“The Queen comes of a large family of ten, in which the daughters were obliging enough to be born at such intervals that each formed a pair with one of the brothers. The eldest surviving daughter and the eldest son had but a year between them. Then came three boys who consorted together, then a girl, now Lady Rose Leveson-Gower, and her brother Michael, followed by Queen Elizabeth and her brother David. The family thus drifted

## QUEEN ELIZABETH

naturally into pairs, with the three unpaired boys forming a little clan of their own. They were an unusually good-looking family, and they all alike possessed a curious power of charm, due perhaps to their being perfectly natural and unaffected. The Queen and her brother David were the most beautiful children I have ever seen, she with the traditional Irish blend of dark hair and intensely blue eyes, David ruddy as befits his name, with blue eyes and golden curls. Truth compels me to admit that these three pairs of brothers and sisters, though devoted to each other, used at times to quarrel furiously, using hands and teeth on each other with all their youthful vigour. For some reason, ever since the Queen was born I always addressed her as 'Princess Elizabeth,' kissed her hand, and invariably made her a low bow, which she acknowledged haughtily but courteously.

"She was an extraordinarily graceful, dainty, and engaging child. Her mother had made for her a long dress of rose-coloured brocade, copied from a Velasquez picture: full pleated and gathered at the waist, stiffened with a hoop and coming right down to her feet. She wore this with a little cap of gold tissue, and it was the prettiest sight in the world to see this graceful little figure dancing in this red dress, daintily lifting her skirts to show that she was doing her steps properly, and bubbling over with mirth. I have vivid recollections of seeing this little rose-clad fairy dancing out into the garden in her long dress and skipping daintily

## AN EARLY IMPRESSION

under the interlaced boughs of the pleached lime walks, called by the family the 'Cloisters,' a little vision of merry gracefulness. It was very like a living Watteau panel.

"For the reasons I have given I always associate her with St. Paul's Waldenbury rather than with Glamis, perhaps because the setting was far more *intime*.

"Her brother, the comely David, had as a child the uncanny Scottish gift of 'second sight.' I was frankly sceptical about this art, and suspected David of the time-honoured gift of pulling his elders' legs, until the third year of the War, when his elder brother Michael was reported by the War Office as killed. The Strathmores had already had one son killed, and were broken-hearted at this fresh disaster, and David was summoned from school to remain at home with his parents.

"He lunched with me one day, and I pointed out to him that he should not wear coloured clothes and a coloured tie so soon after his brother's death.

"'Michael is not dead,' protested David. 'I have seen him twice. He is in a big house surrounded with fir trees. He is not dead, but I think he is very ill, because his head is tied up in a cloth.'

"I pointed out that the War Office had reported Michael as killed, and they were not likely to have made a mistake, but David would not budge. 'Michael is not dead,' he maintained, 'because I have seen him twice, and I won't wear mourning for him.'

"Three months later David proved to be perfectly right. Michael had been shot through the head,

## QUEEN ELIZABETH

and it was some time before he recovered his just mental powers and was able to let his family know that he was in a prison hospital in Germany.

“David saw, too, what he called ‘grey people’ in some of the rooms at Glamis. According to him, they suddenly appeared, moved about, and as suddenly disappeared, without, however, alarming him in the least. I was equally sceptical about these ghostly visitants, but David’s accounts never varied, and he described his ‘grey people’s’ costumes down to the last detail. Is it quite impossible that David may have seen with his inner eyes some of his fifteenth-century forbears in their former terrestrial surroundings? *Quien sabe?*”

“With a divining-rod in his hand he was extraordinarily susceptible to underground water, but as he grew older and ceased to be a child this uncomfortable and uncanny power of ‘second sight’ suddenly left him.

“And so the Lyons grew up, but retained all their power of charm, and their curious attractive qualities.

“The three daughters were the sunshine of their father’s house until the inevitable moment came when they had to transfer that sunshine to their husbands’ houses.

“Lord and Lady Strathmore must, I think, feel reconciled to their own loss by the knowledge that in the case of their youngest daughter, that sunshine of manner has conquered far-off continents with its charm.”

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### EDUCATION—MUSIC LESSONS





## CHAPTER SEVEN

LADY STRATHMORE never submitted to the growing fashion of banishing daughters to boarding-schools, but when she was about nine years old Queen Elizabeth went for two terms to a day-school in London, where she won the prize for literature, given for an essay.

Except for this brief school career, she was educated entirely at home ; in fact, she and her brother's first and most successful governess was Lady Strathmore.

"My mother," writes David Lyon, "taught us to read and write. At the age of six and seven we could each have written a fairly detailed account of all the Bible stories. This knowledge was entirely due to our mother's teaching. She also taught us the rudiments of music, dancing, and drawing, at all of which my sister became fairly proficient."

Later on came French governesses, with whom the children were always made to speak French, with the result that when she was ten the Queen could speak it quite as readily as English. The dreaded time of separation between the brother and sister came one sad autumn. I have found an old

## QUEEN ELIZABETH

tear-stained letter : “ David went to school for the first time on Friday. I miss him horribly.” On David’s departure the French governess of the time was succeeded by a German lady. Henceforth Lady Elizabeth had to make the best of lonely lessons.

She worked hard, soon learnt to chatter in German, and inspired a deep devotion in the heart of “ Miss Fräulein,” as the new governess was called.

Lady Elizabeth became quite attached to her. Not so the less tolerant David, who, whenever he returned for the holidays, complained of many faults.

It does seem that she was a little lacking in tact.

One day David, tall with pride, went out for the first time with a gun and returned triumphant, carrying a hare. He decided that this trophy of his budding sportsmanship should grace the school-room table. The hare was carefully cooked and ceremoniously served.

Unfortunately, that day the children happened to be late for luncheon, but when they reached home they found the hearty Fräulein had eaten the hare practically whole, leaving for the hunter nothing but the head.

This crowning offence caused a rupture. Diplomatic relations between the Fräulein and the brother of her pupil—always precarious—were finally broken off, and she departed from Glamis, where she is still remembered in a legendary way as having shaken the foundations of the Castle by her Teutonic tread.

Her place was taken by an English lady who

## MUSIC LESSONS

immediately recommended herself to her pupil and her brother for many reasons, not the least important being her proficiency at tennis, a game at which her predecessors had been but broken reeds.

The Queen passed the Junior Oxford examination, but after the age of fourteen her education was too much interrupted by the irregularities of life in war-time to allow of her going in for any more examinations. Neither was it possible for her to go abroad for the process quaintly called "finishing." When in London she always had lessons in music and in dancing, both of which she loved.

Madame D'Egville, whose dancing classes she attended, remembers her as one of her most "graceful and intelligent pupils," and her music mistress, Madame Matilde Verne, wrote the following recollections when the Queen was Duchess of York :

"My first remembrance of the Duchess of York is of a very pretty, vivacious little girl dancing into the room, throwing her arms round her mother's neck and crying: 'Oh! thank you, Mummie, thank you!' and then to us all: 'My mother is always so kind!'

"Shortly afterwards, she and her brother David both became pupils at my newly-opened Pianoforte School, and very intelligent pupils they were. Lady Elizabeth had a very good ear for music and learnt quickly, so at the end of six months she was actually able to play at the children's concert. My sister, who gave the first lessons, writes about this :

## QUEEN ELIZABETH

“ ‘The Duchess remembers this concert well (she told me so when we went to see her the day before she was married), because she “got out” in her piece and was ashamed. But she must have been a “star” performer, for she played last and it was always my custom to put the best player at the end of the programme. She also sang very prettily. She was a dear little girl. I used to lift her on and off the piano-stool oftener than was necessary just because she was so nice to take hold of.’

“ ‘I myself remember a funny little incident in connection with this concert. Just before it all the children had extra practice with an assistant teacher. One day, in what we called the Paderewski Room, I heard some one being taught an exercise that all pupils, old and young, detest. It seemed to me that the struggle was going on too long, so I went into the Torture Chamber, and found that little Elizabeth was the victim. “We have only just begun,” said the teacher firmly.

“ ‘I looked at the child. Though reverent in face, there was a warning gleam in her eyes as she said to the teacher, “Thank you very much. That was wonderful,” and promptly slid off the music-stool, holding out her tiny hand in polite farewell. She always had perfect manners. I am glad to remember that she was easily coaxed back to the piano, and that the practice lesson ended happily.

“ ‘Later on, when I gave her lessons myself, she had grown into a most fascinating girl. The charm of her simplicity, her impulsive, warm-

## MUSIC LESSONS

hearted manner, the innocent expression in her lovely eyes, are beyond my powers of description.

“ ‘ I gave her her last lessons at Glamis six months before her engagement was announced. She was then more serious than usual, owing, I think, partly to the fact that Lady Strathmore had been very ill and she had helped, with the most unselfish devotion, to nurse her.’ ”

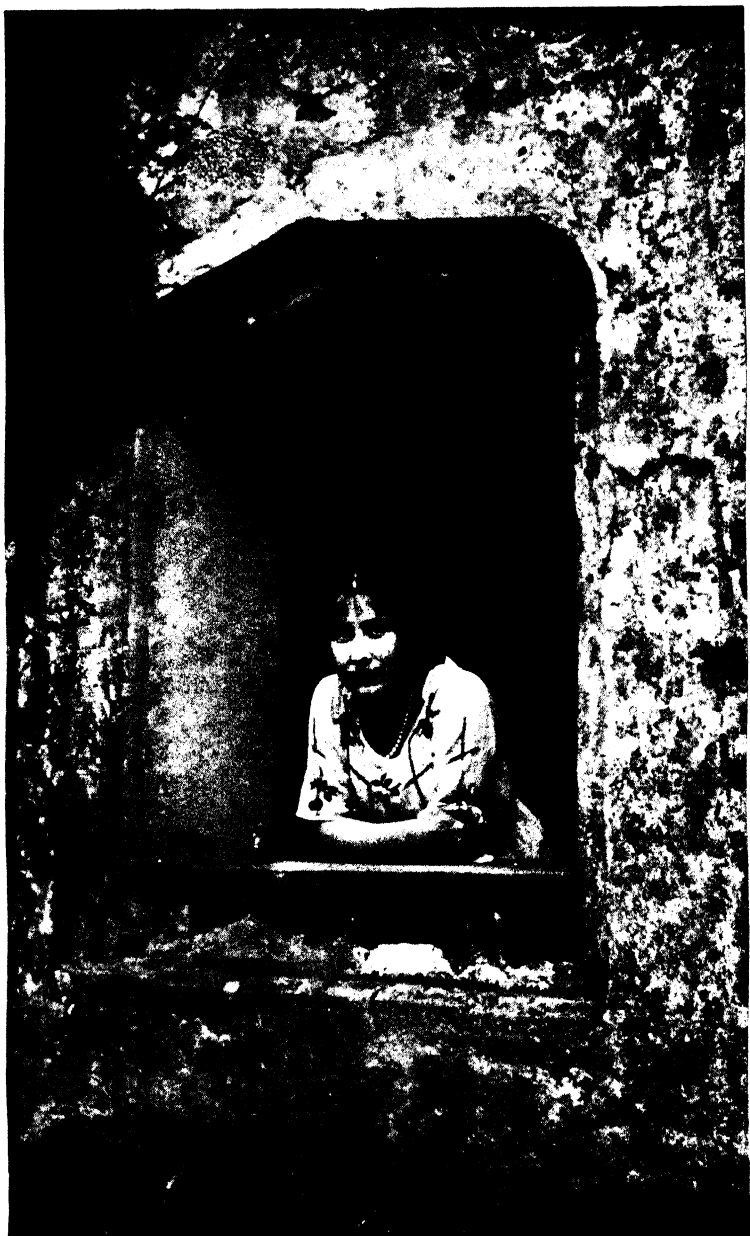
Very soon after the Queen's marriage Madame Verne went to tea with her, and her first curtsy was interrupted by her old pupil exclaiming : “ You *must* give the Duke of York some lessons. I have already begun to teach him his notes, and he knows three ! ”





QUEEN ELIZABETH DRESSED UP FOR A CHARADE  
IN ONE OF THE COSTUMES OUT OF THE OLD  
CHEST AT GLAMIS





QUEEN ELIZABETH AT BISHAM ABBEY

## CHAPTER EIGHT

AN EARLY CONQUEST—GIRLHOOD



## CHAPTER EIGHT

**D**URING the Queen's early childhood, though the year was chiefly divided between the English and Scottish homes, there were frequent visits to London, where Lord Strathmore then owned 20 St. James's Place, a beautiful Adam house.

Many boys and girls dislike children's parties, gratified greed failing to make up for social discomfort. But the Queen was untroubled by shyness, and loved the parties which—so her hostesses tell me—she appreciably brightened.

She was always surrounded by adoring children. One of her contemporaries some years ago wrote the following account of the impression she made on him when she was six or perhaps seven years old.

“ No child I can remember had charm to anything approaching the same degree as the Duchess of York. If I peer back into the mists of childhood, a few pictures detach themselves, made memorable and lit up by the rosy glow of her personality. I was a sentimental, susceptible little boy. Every month saw some new goddess dawn over my horizon, some little girl ‘ my favourite friend ’ whom I used to wait for in Hyde Park in the

## QUEEN ELIZABETH

morning, or make an anxious rush to sit beside at a party. They did not all return my affection. With the austerity of their age they were wont to prefer a companion of their own sex, but I persevered. At this time I was devoted to M., chiefly on account of her long hair, which I considered the distinguishing mark of feminine beauty; and I was pursuing her smooth, black plaits through the slim Adam columns and pale plastered drawing-rooms of Lansdowne House when my shoulder was seized by a grown-up lady who said: 'I want you to come and talk to this little girl; she is called Elizabeth Lyon.' I turned and looked and was aware of a small, charming rosy face around which twined and strayed rings and tendrils of silken hair, and a pair of dewy grey eyes. Her flower-like mouth parted in a grave, enchanting smile, and between the pearly teeth flowed out tones of drowsy melting sweetness that seemed to caress the words they uttered. From that moment my small damp hand clutched at hers and I never left her side. Forgotten were the charms of M. Her hair might stretch from London to Paraguay for all I cared. Forgotten were all the pretenders to my heart. Here was the true heroine. She had come. I had seen and she had conquered.

"For the next two summers she figured largely in my life. I remember her playing in the Park, racing beside her yellow-haired brother, her hair flying in the wind, her cheeks bright with the exercise, her clear infectious laugh ringing out:

## AN EARLY CONQUEST

or sitting demurely at the tea-table : or best of all, at a fancy-dress party dressed as a Vandyck child, with high square bodice and stiff satin skirts, surrounded by a bevy of adorers. I thought she was like the Princess of every fairy-tale I had ever read. ‘Why, she’s exactly like one of the children of Charles I,’ said a lady behind me. From that moment Charles I, about whom I then knew nothing, for I had only got as far as Richard I, became my favourite king in history.

“After those two summers I never saw the Duchess again until I grew up, except once, when I was ten years old, living in London because I was too ill to go to school. Then she came to tea with her governess. Outside the short November day was fading to a close. I lay upon a sofa, watching the gale blow about the tops of the plane trees, listening to the patter of the rain on the window and feeling very small and lonely. The door was thrown open and a lady came in with a little girl. It was over three years since I had seen her, an age in a child’s life, and in the dim light I hardly knew her for a moment. She was taller and paler and darker than I remembered. But her charm was the same : the drowsy caressing voice, the slow sweet smile, the delicious gurgle of laughter, the soft eyes glowing with sympathy as she leant forward in the firelight ; they had not altered. At the first silvery words all my depression fell from me. And when she went I felt it worth being ill a thousand times over so to be visited.”

## QUEEN ELIZABETH

This conquest was not the only one made in these early days, for it was at Lady Leicester's party that the then Duke of York first saw his future wife, and amidst all the distractions of crackers and iced cakes the little girl—then aged five—made so deep an impression that at their first grown-up meeting, about thirteen years later, he immediately recognized her.

Besides these occasional weeks in London, the routine of the future Queen's life was several times joyfully interrupted by visits to Italy, where she went to stay at the Villa Capponi with Lady Strathmore's beautiful mother, Mrs. Scott. The Queen vividly remembers the thrill of night travel and restaurant-car meals, and at the end of the journey the glamour of being "abroad," the gabble and gesticulations of foreigners, and all the colour and beauty of this Italian home. No wonder, for her grandmother's garden, glowing in Southern sunshine, was a dream of loveliness, with magnificent cypresses standing out against the blue distant mountains behind Fiesole and, immediately below, the City of Florence, with Giotto's famous tower.

Inside, everything was in perfect harmony with the surroundings, and one can imagine how impressive to a child must have been the great room with an organ at one end, a fireplace in the centre, and dark panelled walls—a stately solemn room, yet full of comfort and brightness. Lovely furniture, flowers, books, beauty everywhere. And the little

## GIRLHOOD

chapel with its few exquisite pictures, and walls covered with red damask.

Good as it was to go abroad, it was equally delightful to return to her English or her Scottish home, in neither of which was life ever dull. For though "the Benjamins" of the Bowes-Lyon family were so inseparable, they were by no means left to themselves, being amply provided with attentive elder brothers and sisters, in all of whose interests Queen Elizabeth was absorbed.

To the child of seven years old the marriage of her eldest brother, Lord Glamis, to the Duke of Leeds' daughter, Lady Dorothy Osborne, came as a great excitement. "Me and Dorothy's little brother are going to be bridesmaids," she wrote.

Two years later there was another family wedding, when the eldest daughter, Lady Mary, married Lord Elphinstone, and the Queen, in a Romney frock, was again bridesmaid.

There still remained one unmarried sister, and of her much-appreciated companionship the Queen was not deprived for many years, for it was not until 1916 that Lady Rose married Mr. Leveson-Gower. She tells me: "Elizabeth was an ideal younger sister: always original and amusing and, as now, full of fun or sympathy—whichever you happened to need at the moment."

Early supplied with a bevy of nephews and nieces, Queen Elizabeth always showed great talent for aunthood. As instructress in the art of making daisy chains, organizer of hide-and-seek, promoter



## QUEEN ELIZABETH

of make-believe and dressing-up, Aunt "Elizabuff" reigned supreme.

Also as possessor of pets, for, as well as birds, she kept rabbits, frogs, chickens, goats, tortoises and pigs. Aunts who keep pigs are by no means common, and the nephews and nieces were duly grateful.

In her own early childhood she was never in want of occupation. That bored cry of "What can we do now?" never distressed the ears of attendants. Able to make her own fun, she needed no jaded slaves of the lamp.

When she was quite small she liked dolls, but they needed to have eyes that would shut and hair that could stand rather ostentatious brushing.

As soon as she could read she gobbled books, and her nurse tells me she remembers elbows perpetually rough and red from excessive reading on the floor.

Though now an ardent and good tennis player, she was as a child more addicted to climbing trees and running races than to orthodox games, and golf held no charms for her. Riding she loved, and at a very early age was allowed to trot about on "Bobs" by herself. In a scarlet habit, proudly waving to all she met, she was a familiar figure on this minute pony.

On wet days the family dressing-up chest was an unfailing resource, as it was not only full of costumes of the periods between James I and George IV, but also held a wonderful variety of wigs.

But probably in all weathers and at all times her

## GIRLHOOD

favourite occupation was making friends. At this pastime she was so successful that visitors, pretending to be superstitious, used by miscounting to make Lady Strathmore believe her party to be thirteen in number so that the little Lady Elizabeth should come down to luncheon to make fourteen. "How many will there be in the dining-room?" the butler asked one day. "Fourteen if you count I," answered Lady Elizabeth.

Here, before leaving the Queen's early childhood, I will insert a description of her and her family by Lord Gorell, written soon after her marriage.

### A REMEMBRANCE

"It is quite twenty-one years since I first was enslaved by the charms of little Lady Elizabeth Lyon: she had just attained the fascinating age of six, and she took my heart by storm even as she has since taken by storm the hearts of the whole British people. It was no exceptional conquest on her part; she had a way with her, even so long ago, which made slaves of all her acquaintance. But after a few days' preliminary shyness, during which the stranger was gazed at solemn-eyed as a probationer, she discovered that he had a certain faculty for nonsense, and she invested him accordingly with the honours of her confidence, soon reaching to the stage when she was sufficiently sure of her power imperiously to command her youngest brother, David, then aged four, not to bother 'me,' with the unconcealed object

## QUEEN ELIZABETH

of clearing him out of the way in order to 'bother' me all by herself. Two years later she confided to me that 'she was sure she had bothered me awfully' when she was six.

"That was not a fear that she need ever have entertained: there are children, of course, who bother grown-ups, but Lady Elizabeth was never one of them. To every lover of children she had about her that indefinable charm that bears elders irresistibly into fairyland. In the simplest and most unconscious way she was all-conquering. In addition to the charm of especially winsome childhood, she had, even then, that blend of kindliness and dignity that is the peculiar characteristic of her family. She was small for her age, responsive as a harp, wistful and appealing one moment, bright-eyed and eager the next, with a flashing smile of appreciative delight, an elfin creature swift of movement—the vision of her little figure tripping across to the sundial on the lawn in front of the grim, old, haunted Scottish castle of Glamis remains with me as a wonderful study in contrasts—quick of intelligence, alive with humour, able to join in any of the jokes and hold her own with the jokers, and touchingly and sometimes amusingly loyal to her friends. Once, when a comic corrupting of names was going on among the house-party, proceeding from the innocuous to the opprobrious until mine had descended to 'Mr. Abominable,' Lady Elizabeth promptly took up the cudgels in defence of her defamed cavalier (whom privately she was wont to order about under the title of 'old boy'),

## GIRLHOOD

and from 'Mr. Nice' soon arrived by a process of transmutations all her own at 'Mr. Remarkable,' which gave her great content.

"To remember her at Glamis is to remember her in the very happiest of settings. She and David were the two small children of a large and wholly delightful family, and it is a marvel that they were never, either of them, in the very least degree spoilt. No house-parties were ever so altogether friendly as those of the summer holidays at Glamis some twenty years ago, when the boys were at Oxford or Eton, and all, sons and daughters alike, were young, unmarried, and at home—with the exception only of Lord Glamis, who was already in the Guards. The ostensible reason for the assembly was cricket, jolly cricket on the castle ground or in the neighbourhood, not too serious cricket. Once a match at Arbroath depended entirely on the ability of Fergus, a great wag as well as a dear and gallant fellow, but no cricketer, to achieve the unusual and make a run, and amidst cheers for once he managed a fluke shot : on another occasion against Brechin, the castle side had eight runs to make to win and six wickets in hand : 'Uncle Pat,' Lord Strathmore's brother, who was out, even then refused to be confident of victory until we all declared that if we were beaten he would be justified in his pessimism for ever—and we actually lost by four runs ! Yet another year, Brechin, always our most dour opponents, won by one wicket, the last run being obtained daringly off a catch in the slips—dropped of course in the tension ! There was

## QUEEN ELIZABETH

always incident and excitement in plenty over cricket at Glamis : once we all subscribed for a Panama hat for our captain, Lord Strathmore, in honour of his doing the ' hat-trick ' against the Dundee Drapers.

" And then when this serious-non-serious cricket was over for the day, came cricket again in the evening, very serious indeed, with Elizabeth and David in rivalry for the perpetual right to bat.

" In between our matches were days on the moors after grouse and black-cock, and other days of picnic, nominally rest days, when Elizabeth would sally forth bestriding an aged donkey, reputed to be at Glamis for a quiet end, and the unfortunate slaves on foot, to please their imperious and delighted little mistress of the ceremonies, instead of sauntering leisurely along beside her as they had planned to do, had to run breathlessly at her stirrup and then exert all their tired muscles to prevent donkey and rider from plunging, with shrieks of joy from the latter, headlong into the stream.

" And the evenings also were young and joyous ; some wonderful dressings-up were devised, as when Alec in charades brought the house down as the ' great gulf ' fixed between Heaven and Hell. Lady Mary's birthday came at the end of August, and that was hailed by her brothers as an opportunity for comic speech-making, Jock replying on her behalf with sallies that called for her amused indignation and Fergus for the ladies, to the laughter of all—after which Elizabeth, sitting up late in honour of the

## GIRLHOOD

occasion, would consent very sleepily to be taken up to bed.

“Such was her environment in the midst of her brothers and sisters, all on the very happiest terms together at Glamis—a great and historic house, no stiffness, no aloofness anywhere, no formality except the beautiful old custom of having the two pipers marching round the table at the close of dinner, followed by a momentary silence as the sound of their bagpipes died away gradually in the distance of the castle. It was all so friendly and so kind, days of such whole-hearted delightful youth under the gracious guidance of Lady Strathmore, kindest and most understanding of hostesses, and the old castle re-echoed with fun and laughter. No wonder little Elizabeth came up to me once as my visit was nearing its end and demanded: ‘But why don’t you *beg* to stay?’

“Those days are gone, as Alec and Fergus are gone. We are all older, married and dispersed: little Elizabeth Lyon is Duchess of York and the idol of the nation, her smile the cherished possession of everyone whose eyes rest upon her for a moment as she passes on her royal road. An unspoilt bringer of happiness, she is fulfilling her widespread, public responsibilities of to-day with the same infectious and responsive charm as was peculiarly her own in the days of her childhood—and the Princess Elizabeth is there to grow from infancy into just such another as her mother was. But the remembrance is with me unchangeably of

## QUEEN ELIZABETH

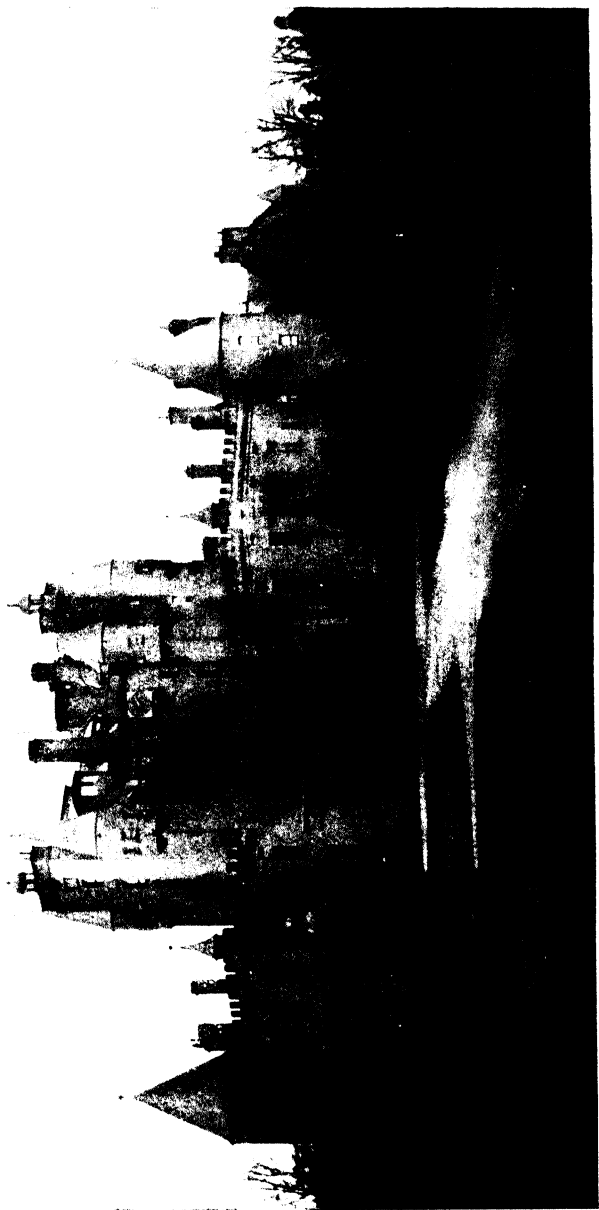
a gracious, happy family, loving and loved, and of a little fairy playmate whose companionship was a dancing magic from which all who were honoured by it can never again be free : they are enslaved for always and happy in their bonds.”

## CHAPTER NINE

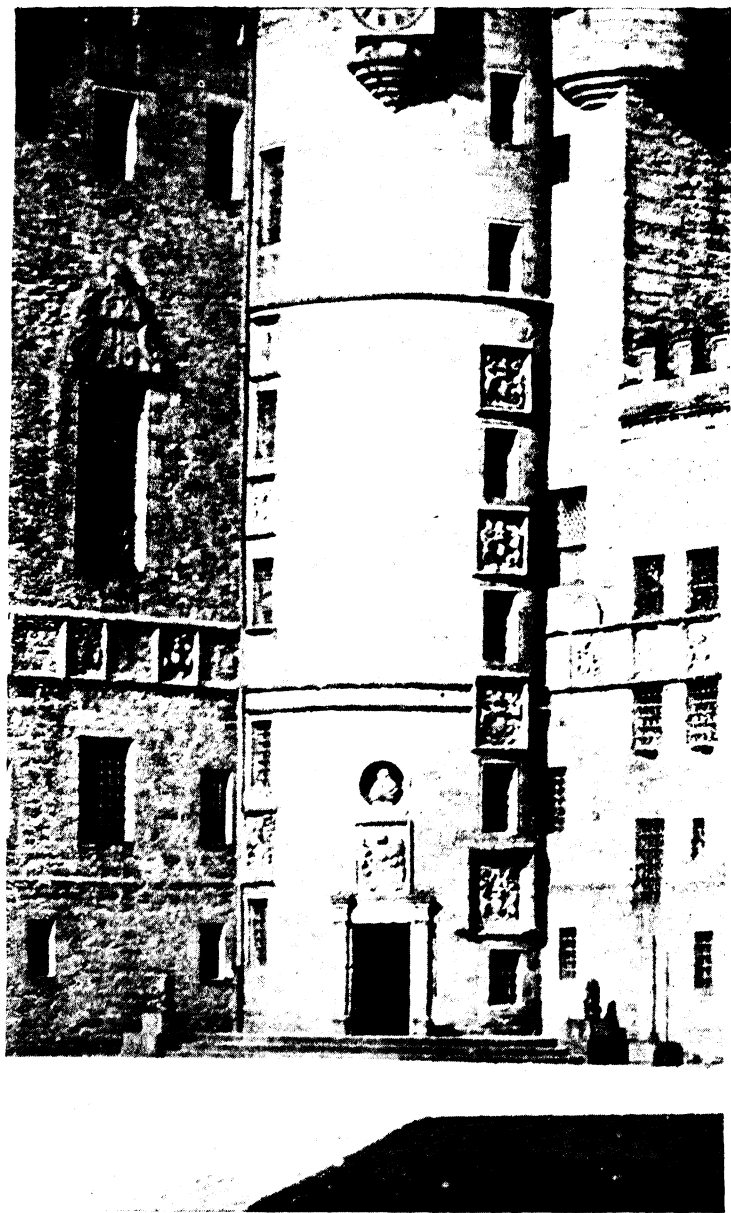
### OUTBREAK OF WAR







GLAMIS CASTLE  
(*Photograph by Lafayette*)



THE DOORWAY AT GLAMIS CASTLE

## CHAPTER NINE

**F**OR thirteen years Queen Elizabeth's life was undisturbed by Fate. Her childhood was a tranquil spell of time, spent in the haven of home, serenely building the boat in which some day to embark on the open seas.

Few families can have enjoyed securer, pleasanter harbourage than hers until history reasserted itself, the violent kind of history which no doubt the Queen then thought safely confined to history books. The world-storm swept away the breakwaters of privilege, and the private barques, floating on untroubled home waters, were torn from their moorings and swirled into the surrounding seas.

On the evening of her fourteenth birthday the Queen went to one of the largest theatres in London. This birthday treat was one which she will never forget, for it was August 4th, 1914, and from the theatre-box she watched with her mother and her brothers a crowd gone mad with excitement at the Declaration of War.

Then followed those first days of bewildering strangeness and wild enthusiasm. For everyone there was an end to normal life, but some were so circumstanced that for a time they remained mere

## QUEEN ELIZABETH

spectators. To them the War, however thrilling, seemed a fantastic cataclysm in which they were not actually involved. History had not yet invaded their private life, and the illusion of personal immunity dies hard. But for the Lyon family there was no such postponement. To them, from the outset, the War came as a convincing reality. There were four brothers of an age at which there could be no hesitation, and within the first few days those four brothers, Patrick, John, Michael, and Fergus, had all joined the army.

The Queen tells me how vividly she remembers the thrill of those first days of upheaval, the complete collapse of schoolroom routine and "the bustle of hurried visits to chemists for outfits of every sort of medicine, and to gunsmiths to buy all the things that people thought they wanted for a war, and found they didn't."

A week later she went up to Glamis, which was already being converted into a hospital. Strangely silent the castle must have seemed compared with the cricketing Augusts. Four absent brothers leave a great emptiness, and for the first time there was no elder sister, for Lady Rose was training in a London hospital.

The billiard-table was piled high with "comforts"; thick shirts and socks, mufflers, body-belts and sheepskin coats to be cut out and treated with some kind of varnish.

The Queen tells me: "Lessons were neglected, for during these first few months we were so busy

## OUTBREAK OF WAR

knitting, knitting, knitting and making shirts for the local battalion—the 5th Black Watch. My chief occupation was crumpling up tissue paper until it was so soft that it no longer crackled, to put into the lining of sleeping-bags.”

Then in December she remembers going out one day to the village shop, not as usual, in search of bull’s-eyes, but to buy unaccustomed things—Woodbines and Gold Flake and Navy Cut. The first batch of wounded were expected from the hospital in Dundee.

For the first time in her life Queen Elizabeth spent Christmas at Glamis, and in the Castle Crypt a circle of wounded soldiers stood round a great dark, resinous tree, its foot concealed by parcels, its branches stretching widely to the high bare walls of grey stone, and its hundred flickering candles reflected in the shining breastplates of the knights in armour.

From that first War Christmas until 1919, the trim white beds, arranged in ordered rows along the panelled walls of the huge dining-room, were never unoccupied.

It was not long before all four brothers were “somewhere in France.” A heavy weight of dread lay on the Strathmores, and alas! they were not destined to be spared the realization of their fears.

In September 1915, Fergus was killed at Loos. Early in 1917 his younger brother Michael was taken prisoner and reported killed. For a long time he was too ill to communicate with his family, and they

## QUEEN ELIZABETH

believed him dead. The camp in which he was imprisoned was one of the worst, and his sufferings were very great. When he returned at the end of the War he did not tell his family that he had given up his turn to go to Holland in favour of a badly wounded brother officer : thus indefinitely prolonging his own ordeal. This fact Lord Strathmore learnt long afterwards from another prisoner.

## CHAPTER TEN

### GLAMIS AS A WAR HOSPITAL





## CHAPTER TEN

**S**OLDIERS going into action would have done wisely to label themselves "To Glamis Castle." Among all the big country houses converted into hospitals, none can have provided a more peaceful parenthesis between the sufferings of the past and the menace of the future.

Run with the minimum of red tape, it was the only hospital in which there were no regulations as to "bounds" and hours. The patients were treated neither as children nor as prisoners, but as privileged guests, and the confidence placed in them was always justified. In this hospital there was never any "trouble." Lady Rose, who after her training in the London hospital took complete charge, was a gentle and efficient "Sister"; and every member of her family contended with one another in efforts to make the men feel at home.

Their efforts appear to have been crowned with success, at any rate with the sergeant who said to a visitor: "My three weeks at Glamis have been the happiest I ever struck. I love Lady Strathmore so very much on account of her being so very like my dear mother, as was; and as for Lady Elizabeth, why, she and my fiancay are as like as two peas."

## QUEEN ELIZABETH

Wrapped in blankets, their kit gone, their uniforms ragged, torn away and cut from their wounds by the doctors, the first party of men came in the winter time. Scarcely caring where they were going, they arrived dazed and exhausted by their long journey, each bringing his own account of the particular corner of hell in which he had suffered.

Those who were not bedridden ate their meals in the great stone Crypt, and some were at first a little awed by those ghostly soldiers of other days, the men in armour, burnished sentinels standing at perpetual attention against the grim bareness of the walls.

But timidity soon melted, and the guests became at ease, both with the owners of the house and with its reputed ghosts, and those who were well enough to fling themselves into all the entertainment provided came near to forgetting unforgettable things. In fine weather they explored the Castle grounds, or went for long, soothing motor drives in beautiful country, the peacefulness of which made War recede into unreality.

Indoors they endangered the cloth on the billiard-table or, to Lady Rose's accompaniment, lustily sang: "We don't want to lose you," "The Sunshine of your Smile," "A little grey home in the West," and many other favourites, the half-tender, half-derisive songs of those tuneful years.

And all day long in the huge ward they smoked and wrote letters, wrestled with jig-saw puzzles,

## GLAMIS AS A WAR HOSPITAL

played Patience and chaffed their nurses. And in the evening when it was cold and dark outside, and the lights glowed in the ward, and great armfuls of logs blazed up the chimney, and the iron-studded door had creaked to and fro for the last time, and all of them were in; then the small tables were drawn up and rubbers of whist were played.

It was at this time that the present Queen used to come down to play with the soldiers, and the nurses tell me how each one of them hoped she would sit at his table and share in his game, and how occasionally there were words because some aspirants thought others unfairly pushing. And often, in the touchingly fresh voice of her fourteen years, she would sing "Strawberry Fair," "I have a song to sing O!" and other old-fashioned melodies.

She was, of course, far too young to be officially enrolled a member of the Hospital staff, but besides entertaining the soldiers she was allowed to undertake all sorts of odd duties in scullery, pantry and ward.

Her unremitting ambition was to put the soldiers at their ease—to disperse the inevitable preliminary shyness.

One day she dressed her brother David—then aged 12—as a lady in cloak, skirt, veil, furs, and a becoming hat, and took him all round the ward, introducing him as her cousin. David asked the men all those questions that bright ladies used to ask wounded soldiers, and they thought him a very

## QUEEN ELIZABETH

charming lady, and were not undeceived until he told them on the following day.

During the Christmas holidays the Hospital was especially lively. There were formal whist drives with much preparation beforehand, prizes set out for the winners, a bunch of flowers on each little table; the nurses superlatively starched, and the men aggressively clean, with boots like looking-glasses. When the prizes had been presented the competitors would dance or blacken their faces, dress up in borrowed garments—skirts and feathers—and to the music of numerous mouth-organs, march to the village, singing through the keen, windy darkness of the avenue. There were frequent expeditions into Forfar to see the movies, and some to the pantomime in Dundee, with the long drive home at night across the Sidlaws, the car lamps searching along the white road across which rabbits scudded like phantoms.

Once, to the great interest of the British Army, a party of New Zealand and Maori soldiers arrived to be shown over the Castle by the present Queen, who answered all their questions and nearly drowned them in tea.

Periodically came the terribly painful breaks when convalescence was declared over and the soldiers had to leave to make way for a new party of wounded. Then there would be a farewell supper with speeches and flashlight photographs, crackers, caps, mottoes, mouth-organs and a special present for each man—a fountain-pen perhaps, or a

## GLAMIS AS A WAR HOSPITAL

writing-case, some such small, tangible reminder of the haven he was leaving. On these tense evenings there was, of course, always a ceaseless barrage of jokes, but lumps in the throat grew painful.

With agonized blots the outgoing soldiers wrote their names in the big leather-bound visitors' book, and, as they said "Good-bye," most of the men gave to the Queen their special "souvenirs"; bullets, shell-cases, or little pieces of shrapnel, and to each the expression in her eyes said, "Soldier, I wish you well."

And so they went back to become as mere drops in one wave of the sea, and some of them never wrote, and some wrote often, and some still write to-day. And the motors that carried them back to Dundee brought others to fill their place, strangers to be made friends with, men and boys, English, Scotch, and Irish; some gassed, some convalescent, but all with the strange, initiated look of men who have been in action.

And again all day the gramophone brayed out its tunes and whist battles raged, and there were dances and concerts, and when the lights were out in the ward, each new party of soldiers told one another ghost stories. Sometimes there were hideous rat-hunts in the Crypt with sticks, and fierce war-cries, and a kill, and always much attention was paid to some perverse brown hens, Rhode Island Reds, lodged in one of the disused towers. In the belief that they would appreciably lessen the war-time shortage by producing unheard-of quantities of eggs,

## QUEEN ELIZABETH

these hens were given immense quantities of food. They seemed very grateful for their meals, but there the matter ended.

Thus month after month, through good and bad news, the hospital was kept open to relays of soldiers. And as the war was still "going very tough" and food had become scarce, to the horror of the one remaining gardener, flocks of sheep, munching as they moved, were encouraged to wander over the wide, once well-kept lawns.

During these years it is difficult to believe that Queen Elizabeth's lessons can have been very serious or regular. Her schoolroom was high up the winding, grey stone staircase, and its windows looked out across the courtyard where the bell clanged cheerfully for Chapel and for meals.

With so many relations and friends at the front it was scarcely possible not to wait about for the postman. Far away he could be seen, toiling down the long straight avenue to the village, and the soldiers remember the Queen waiting for him every morning, either on the grey stone steps or by the cannon, a small, eager figure against the sombre, iron-studded door, and watching her every movement, Peter, her black satin Cocker, waited with her.

When B.E.F. envelopes had been torn open and letters read, there would be parcels of "comforts" to be sent off. And perhaps as soon as lessons had started a hum would be heard in the distance, and governess and pupil would race to the top of the

## GLAMIS AS A WAR HOSPITAL

Tower, where the wind blew in a gale tugging at the flag, and from there they would watch the high aeroplane that seemed so tiny a thing to make so loud a noise. It could be seen for a long time until it was lost in the mist of the Grampians, and as they watched they were so stirred by the audacity of Man and the thought of the crisis through which he was now passing, that it became difficult to turn their minds away from their contemporaries back to the early Britons or Attila's Huns.

And up the winding staircase all day long, confusing thoughts which were not very concentrated, quavered the music of the gramophone, softened by distance, but still strident: "Good-bye, Dolly, I must leave you," "Tipperary," or the irresistible voice of George Robey, oddly choked and muffled.

And often the light, scuffling steps of a child of five years old were heard, and, with a whisk of his kilt, in darted the Master of Glamis, escaped from his nurse and commanding "Aunt Elizabuff" to be "funny."

At other times there were other steps, also hurrying, but heavy, creaking ones: soldiers dashing past the schoolroom door up to the flat roof with soup-plates full of salt to pour down the chimney. Such Gargantuan armfuls of logs were always being flung on the flaming grate that the chimney constantly caught fire.

This hospital was not closed until some time after the end of the war, and all through 1917 and 1918 numbers of Australian and New Zealand



## QUEEN ELIZABETH

officers, home on leave from the front, were also entertained at Glamis.

As a result of this hospitality, the Queen's correspondence is still swollen, and when she landed at Wellington in New Zealand, in the forefront of the great crowd gathered to meet her she was delighted to recognize one of the officers who had stayed for a few weeks at Glamis.

## CHAPTER ELEVEN

A SOLDIER'S DESCRIPTION OF GLAMIS AS A HOSPITAL





A PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN JUST BEFORE HER  
ENGAGEMENT



NINETEEN YEARS OLD  
*Photograph by Hay Wrightson.*

## CHAPTER ELEVEN

**T**O give a first-hand impression of Glamis as a Castle, I will now quote from a letter written by Sergeant Pearne.

“In August 1915, I left Dundee Royal Infirmary for the Countess of Strathmore’s Hospital at Glamis Castle. My right shoulder had been badly shattered and I had gone through a severe time. The doctors and nurses had done their utmost with success, and it now depended upon quietude, fresh air and, plenty of good food to push me up the ladder of health again.

“When I stepped out of the Countess’s car at lovely old Glamis I was landing at the finest spot a soldier could wish for—a home from home—I stood and gazed with awe and admiration at the lovely old pile of strength, the first real castle I had ever seen, and when I left after six months’ stay I had grown to love—even to worship—dear old Glamis from the very flagstaff to the lowest step.

“In that time I spent one of the happiest periods of my life ; every comfort, every care, an abundance of excellent food and nothing to do but be happy and get fat.

## QUEEN ELIZABETH

“Come what may, I shan’t ever forget this splendid old family, which runs back for over eight hundred years, for the very great care and many kindnesses I received from them while living at dear old Glamis Castle.

“We slept in the beautiful dining-room converted into a ward of sixteen beds, and our dining-hall was the ancient historic Crypt, full of old battle-axes, swords, suits of armour, wild animals’ skins, etc. etc. The library and the billiard-room, with its lovely old tapestries, was set aside for our use. To be blunt, there wasn’t a wish went ungratified, and the whole family tried in every way possible to remove, for a time at least, the memories of War from their guests. Yes, Glamis Castle though it might be, was indeed Home from Home.

“My first meeting with the Duchess of York, then Lady Elizabeth, was shortly after my arrival. I had wandered through the Crypt, having a look round, and, passing into King Duncan’s chamber, I suddenly came face to face with a huge brown bear, stuffed and standing on its hind legs with its mouth wide open. Of course I got a rare fright, and I must have shown it because, on looking across the room, I saw a smiling face at a little window. Not approving of anyone laughing at my expense, I scowled at this face and retreated as fast as I could. Later on that same afternoon, I was sitting just outside of the Castle, when out came a girl in a print dress and a sun-bonnet swinging in her hand. I did not know who she was, but I remembered

## A SOLDIER'S DESCRIPTION OF GLAMIS

the face and the brown bear ! This was the little lady.

“ She saw me sitting, hesitated, and then walked towards me. As she did so, I noticed the unconscious dignity of her carriage. She sat down and chatted to me for a good while, asking me questions about myself—hoped I liked the Castle, did my shoulder pain me, and so on.

“ I answered her questions and talked to her as I would to any other girl, and I thought to myself : ‘ Well, you’re a lady and a very charming one,’ but it never dawned on me who she was.

“ She had the loveliest pair of blue eyes I’d ever seen—very expressive, eloquent eyes that could speak for themselves. She had a very taking habit of knitting her forehead just a little now and then when speaking, and her smile was a refreshment.

“ I noticed in particular a sort of fringe at the front of her shapely head. Her teeth were even and very white and well set, and when speaking, she struck me as being a most charming little lady and a most delightful companion.

“ That night I got another shock in learning who my Lady of the afternoon really was. It was the custom when new wounded soldiers arrived for the Countess to visit the wards so that the new arrivals should get introduced. I and five others were lined up when the Countess and my young Lady of the afternoon, accompanied by the Nurse, came into the ward. I happened to be the last one to get introduced and, of course, I was all attention



## QUEEN ELIZABETH

to what was being said before my turn came. You can imagine my feelings of embarrassment when I heard Nurse introduce the little lady I had scowled at and spoken to so free and easy, as Lady Elizabeth! What an ass I felt, and whatever would I say to her? I shook hands as nicely as I could with the Countess and mumbled out something with 'My Lady' in it, and then Nurse said 'Corporal Pearne, this is Lady—' but Lady Elizabeth she broke in and smilingly shook hands, saying, 'Oh, yes, Nurse. I know Corporal Pearne. He and I have already met. We had a chat this afternoon, didn't we?' That set me at rest again. I think she must have seen my confusion and so helped me out of it by her remarks.

"The Countess (a most sweet, motherly lady), in a beautiful, modulated voice said she welcomed us to Glamis and hoped we would be very happy. After a few minutes' talk to Nurse about our wounds, she retired and I sat down to think things over to myself.

"So that's who the young lady I had scowled at on account of the bear was, Lady Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon. I knew she must be a lady of high breeding, that splendid carriage and manner, that sweet, quiet voice, that hesitating yet open manner of talking don't go for nothing. I thought what a real little brick she must be not to take offence at my scowling and not knowing the right way to speak to a lady.

"And I thought how like her mother is to her!

## A SOLDIER'S DESCRIPTION OF GLAMIS

And as how she was a real Countess ! There was no hint given as to the high rank she occupied, no swank at all, and yet there was the same dignity and unconscious grace of manner, just like Lady Elizabeth.

“ I wondered how I'd get into the way of saying ‘ My Lady ’ and ‘ Your Ladyship,’ and ‘ His Lordship.’ So these were the Nobility ! I wondered what the men-folk would be like. I soon found out that the whole family were all alike, the essence of politeness, a smile and a word for everyone, and not an atom of assumption, such a happy way of setting one at rest when speaking to you.

“ As time rolled by and I settled down to the quiet orderly life in this lovely place, I very often had chats with my Lady Elizabeth. Sometimes I'd meet her in the lovely gardens or in the Crypt. Often I've taken a book and gone up to the top of the Castle (a favourite haunt of mine) and found her and her governess having a breather in the lovely country air. She was always the same. ‘ How is your shoulder ? ’ ‘ Do you sleep well ? ’ ‘ Does it pain you ? ’ ‘ Why are you not smoking your pipe ? ’ ‘ Have you no tobacco ? ’ ‘ You must tell me if you haven't and I'll get some for you.’ I must add that the Countess supplied us all with tobacco and cigarettes, and we often had cigars sent in to us.

“ Lady Elizabeth would ask me had I heard from my parents and how were they, did I keep them well informed of the progress of my wound, and so

## QUEEN ELIZABETH

on. She listened very interested when I told her of my work and everyday life and of my family.

“For her fifteen years she was very womanly, kind-hearted and sympathetic. She adored her parents and her home, and was devoted to her brothers and sisters. In return she was loved and adored by all. The servants and all attached to the Castle simply worshipped her. I can see her now. I’d say her sun-bonnet was more often swinging round and round by its strings than on the place for which it was made. She was very fond of cycling about the grounds, often with both her eyes tight shut. I’ve seen her roll off, spring up, grab her sun-bonnet and jump on again, laughing and enjoying my fright immensely.

“She loved flowers and dogs, but was terrified of a mouse, and she thought it very cruel to shoot birds.

“Often after dinner she and her governess would come into the ward and have a game of partner whist. I very often played as her partner, and when she was in doubt about what to play she would tap her forehead with a card and very often quite unwittingly expose its face, which to me was very amusing. Of course, at this time, she was just learning to play whist. When she was perplexed she would look at me and say, ‘*Do* tell me what to play, Ernest.’ Many a happy game we had together. Her governess would jokingly say that we always won, but not fairly.

“Lady Elizabeth was very fond of good music,

## A SOLDIER'S DESCRIPTION OF GLAMIS

and sang sweetly. She had a good knowledge of the different composers of music and of writers of books too. She was quick to see a joke, and didn't she laugh when I and another lad, who had one arm in a sling too, tried to carry a large tray of dishes and plates, and the whole lot of crockery got smashed to pieces on the floor.

"Taking photographs was a favourite hobby of hers, and it was the result of one of her productions that caused a little misunderstanding at my home. When my parents visited me at Dundee while I was so ill, they were warned not to be surprised should they hear that my arm had been amputated. I didn't know this. Lady Elizabeth gave me a photograph she'd taken of me and I sent it home, not thinking that what with my right arm being in a sling, and I was sitting sideways, it didn't show at all.

"When my parents got it, they were sure my right arm was missing and I was keeping it from them. This upset them so much that I got a letter from a chum at home asking me to write and tell my parents that my arm had been amputated, for it was kinder to let them know the worst.

"I couldn't fathom the thing at all and I showed the letter to Lady Elizabeth, and she was very sorry to think my parents were worried unnecessarily, and said something must be done at once to put their minds at rest. So she wrote off straight to them saying exactly how my arm was progressing and how sorry she was to think they'd been in such a taking.

## QUEEN ELIZABETH

“ Then she sent for me to come to the garden at once to have a front view of myself photographed so my arm and the sling could be seen. This was done and a copy sent home to Mother to set her fears at rest, and she has it still and wouldn't part with it for a fortune. This incident just proves what a great interest and depth of sympathy she and her family had in their wounded guests.

“ And even in deep sorrow they still had us in mind. In September 1915 one of Lady Elizabeth's brothers, Captain Fergus, of the Black Watch, came on leave from France for a few hours, which was all that was granted at that time. On the Monday night before the battle of Loos, he left the Castle to return to his battalion. He was a fine gentleman, and a soldier. Nothing more was heard of him, and the big Battle of Loos commenced on the Thursday. Next day, Friday, news came that Captain Fergus had been killed in the taking and holding of the Hohenzollern Redoubt.

“ This bombshell threw the Castle into deep sorrow and gloom, and us boys felt very keenly for our sweet hostess, His Lordship and family. We agreed among ourselves not to go up to the billiard-room, not to play any games on the lawns, to keep piano and gramophone subdued, and above all, not to leave or enter the Castle by the main entrance, but by a side door.

“ We wrote out a letter of sympathy and sent it to Her Ladyship. The next day a reply came back from Her Ladyship thanking us very much for

## A SOLDIER'S DESCRIPTION OF GLAMIS

our sympathy, and she and her husband hoped we would carry on in exactly the usual way and use the main entrance as before, as we were their guests.

"Those were sad days. To end with something funny. One red-hot day I climbed to the top of the Castle tower. Lady Elizabeth was there and we got talking about plays, and so on. The Union Jack was lying at the foot of the flagstaff. I said it would look better at the top, so we decided to haul it up. We did so, and just as it reached the top the wind entangled it over the top of the staff, and try as we might it wouldn't right itself.

"I said that it had got to be put right and that I would climb up. She said, 'Oh, no! Ernest, you must not attempt such a thing. Even with two good arms, it wouldn't be safe. With one in a sling, it would be madness. You're not to do it.'

"I excused myself and said I was going to try.

"At that she stamped her little foot, and called me 'stubborn,' 'pig-headed,' 'foolhardy,' anything to stop me. Then she ran away to get some one else to prevent me. It was a difficult job, but I managed to scramble up and slide down slowly dragging the flag with me. When I descended to the Crypt I met Lady Elizabeth coming back, and told her it was done. She stared at me amazed. 'Well, Ernest,' she said, 'I didn't think you could have done it! You *are* stubborn!' Yes, it was a sad day when it came to saying good-bye to her and all at dear Glamis."



## CHAPTER TWELVE

### FIRE AT GLAMIS





## CHAPTER TWELVE

**M**OST children cherish the ambition to play a distinguished part in a fire. I remember days when I used to scan the landscape for distant smoke, and in my dreams, to the deafening cheers of a crowd, swarm down a rope made of sheets knotted together, carrying a rescued child under each arm and the baby in my teeth.

Though Queen Elizabeth was not destined to enjoy the supreme glamour of saving life, more fortunate than most children, she was at least privileged to play a prominent part in preserving from destruction the home that she loved.

Towards the end of 1916 there was a very bad fire at Glamis Castle. The cause of the outbreak was never discovered, but it started in one of the upper rooms of the central Keep, and the Queen was the first to notice the smoke and sparks.

Without wasting a moment in which to tell anyone else, she immediately telephoned for the Fire Brigade. The Keep is over ninety feet high, and at that height the wind was blowing strongly. The mischief spread rapidly, and before even the local Fire Brigade arrived the roof had caught fire in several places, and, besides the showers of sparks,

## QUEEN ELIZABETH

long ribands of flame were already curling out of the thick clouds of ascending smoke.

The treacherous river Dean, taking its toll of human life, so legend says, in every seventh year, flows past the Castle only a few hundred yards away.

It was a great relief to remember how close it was, but an immense length of hose was required to pump its waters up to the roof, and unfortunately the Glamis firemen had none sufficiently long. So at first very little could be done, and with increasing anxiety the family watched their threatened home. Louder and louder grew the ominous crackling, and the wind fanned the flames. The wounded soldiers were all away at a cinema, but very soon after the alarm a great, intent crowd had gathered on the lawns. Before long the engines from Forfar came galloping up, but they were not able to do much more than the local brigade.

Fortunately, Queen Elizabeth had also telephoned at once to the Dundee fire brigade, and for this, their sole hope, they now waited in almost unbearable suspense.

Meanwhile from one part of the roof the defiant flames were now blazing, at times hiding the pinnacles of the lovely little towers, and in the fading light the pinkish grey stones of the Castle took on a lurid red glow reflected in the faces of the crowd. Before long a great lead tank under the roof, used for storing water, burst with the heat, and a deluge rushed flooding down the grey stone spiral staircase,

## FIRE AT GLAMIS

threatening to do as serious damage as the flames. This fresh disaster gave the Queen her opportunity, and the way she availed herself of it is remembered by all at Glamis. Armed with brooms, she and her brother and several others under their direction stood on the stairs, diverting the torrent from surging in at the drawing-room door, and sweeping it forward and downward to the lower, wider regions of the staircase where it could escape innocuously into the stone halls and passages below. She then arranged about thirty people in a long queue, and pictures, furniture and other valuables were thus passed from hand to hand down the stairs and carried out of danger.

“It was her little Ladyship told us how to do it and kept us to it,” said a tenant when he was thanked for his services.

After what seemed an eternity the longed-for engines arrived from Dundee. Wild cheers greeted them. At first even their efforts seemed unavailing, and there was an agonising wait, but at last it became clear that the torrents drawn from the river were defeating the fire, and before night fell the flames had been reduced to smouldering smoke.

The extent of the damage was great. To repair it an immense amount of work was needed, and it is only within the last few years that it has been finished.

On the night of this memorable fire Lady Elizabeth was toasted with “Highland Honours” in every house and cottage for miles around.

## QUEEN ELIZABETH

To find the exception that proves the rule is a fascinating search. Much has been said about the Queen's unfailing courtesy, and we are not sorry to hear that in this emergency she, for once, failed to be exquisitely polite. She was too busy. A gaping spectator, making no attempt to be useful, not knowing who she was, kept bothering her with questions. "How had the fire started?" "Whose fault was it?" "Which member of the family slept in which room?" etc. etc.

"I've no time to make conversation!" Lady Elizabeth exclaimed. Unwonted asperity was in her voice and the loungee withdrew discomfited.

"Who's yon prood lassie?" he ruefully enquired.



QUEEN ELIZABETH, AS THE DUKE OF YORK'S BRIDE,  
LEAVES 17 BRUTON STREET



THE KING AND QUEEN DRIVE TO WATERLOO AFTER THEIR WEDDING

*(Photograph by Topical Press)*

## CHAPTER THIRTEEN

PEACE—EARLY SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY





## CHAPTER THIRTEEN

**T**HE coming of Peace brought no immediate outward change to the Strathmores' lives.

For some months they continued to entertain Australian and New Zealand officers who, for various reasons, were unable to return to their far-distant homes. The hospital, too, remained full until late in 1919, and long after the last of the wounded had said good-bye Queen Elizabeth went on helping the soldiers by finding them work and assisting their families through the difficult days of demobilization. Nor was her own anxiety ended by the Armistice. For many months there was the suspense of waiting for the repatriation of Captain Michael Bowes-Lyon who, as has already been said, had for two years been a prisoner in Germany. His health had greatly suffered, and now, when delay seemed so unnecessary, it was very hard to have the longed-for meeting indefinitely postponed.

All the time, by twos and threes, prisoners were returning home ; but for the Strathmores the disappointing weeks dragged on without any certain news. At last, one evening in February 1919, notice suddenly came, and there was only just time to dash to the station to welcome the returning soldier.

## QUEEN ELIZABETH

For his family, in a sense, it was the arrival of that long-awaited train, rather than the Armistice, that ended the War.

For them, as for nearly every family, there were gaps no peace could fill—wounds not to be healed by time : but if life could never be the same again, at least the ordeal of suspense was over. Though recovery was impossible, for the courageous convalescence now became a duty.

You could no longer insulate yourself in an island of time called “the duration of the War.” The emptied Future had to be faced. It was necessary to make the best of what was left, to try to reinvest interest and hope—above all to assist surviving youth to its birthright of happiness.

The Queen was then eighteen years old. In spite of her inherent gaiety, it is not surprising that she was in many ways serious and thoughtful for her age. It must be remembered that she had never known the irresponsibility of that sheltered routine which is the lot of most schoolgirls of to-day, for she had never been away from home, but had always lived in the most intimate association with her parents and their large and exceptionally united family, participating in all the excitements, pleasures and griefs of the grown-up life around her.

After her sister Lady Rose's marriage in 1916, as the only unmarried daughter, she became her mother's right hand, sharing all the duties as well as all the anxieties of those very difficult years.

## EARLY SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY

Most privileged girls pass their years between fourteen and seventeen in equipping themselves for the future, preparing for life rather than living it. Reality scarcely claims them.

But for those whose girlhood coincided with the years of the War, such postponement of experience was impossible.

On so responsive a nature as Queen Elizabeth's the inevitable effect of the War, with its intimate personal sorrow and the sense of universal suffering, was to deepen her natural well-spring of sympathy and to intensify her sense of obligation towards others. Passing from childhood to girlhood at a period when sacrifice was an everyday virtue, and work of some sort a matter of course, her own enjoyment never seemed—as it may to the careless young—the most important concern in life.

Her natural sense of responsibility—a cheerful, not a self-righteous one—was fostered both by her upbringing and by the War. A sense of responsibility is undeniably a burden, and the fact that she never tried to shift any weight from her young shoulders explains why, at the age of eighteen, for all its gaiety, the observant saw on her face a look of experience beyond her years. . . .

“Coming out” is a funny expression. It suggests something deliberately abrupt, a metamorphosis, as though a chrysalis were expected to try its wings at a word of command.

For girls of the War generation there was no

## QUEEN ELIZABETH

official "coming out." They did not make one long stride from schoolroom to ballroom. There was no presentation, no one momentous occasion. It would be difficult to say in which month Queen Elizabeth was accounted "grown up." Life was then too informal. Even fashion contributed to the fusion between the different ages. The era of short skirts had begun, and girls of the day were denied a thrill their mothers and elder sisters knew—the thrill of hearing, as it followed you downstairs, the swish and rustle of your first long dress, the outward and audible symbol of new dignities and potentialities.

Towards the end of the War, Queen Elizabeth was gradually seen more in London, chaperoned either by her mother or her sister, Lady Elphinstone. The fringe of her childhood still remained, but the long thick plait had now become a close brown knot.

Gradually there were more friends, more frocks, more engagements, a fuller to-day and to-morrow.

The close circle of things intimately known expanded, the horizon widened. The Present became entrancing: the Future an iridescent shimmer.

## CHAPTER FOURTEEN

SOCIAL LIFE—QUEEN ELIZABETH AT A BALL



## CHAPTER FOURTEEN

**T**HOUGH Glamis and St. Paul's Waldenbury still claimed most of her time, Queen Elizabeth now visited many country houses.

However much she appreciated new scenes, no counter-attraction ever diminished her love for the homes of her childhood. So strongly did both these familiar places appeal to her, that I doubt whether she knew which she preferred.

One glorious summer day a visitor to St. Paul's Waldenbury asked what her plans were. Gazing at the smooth lawns and bright flower borders that swept towards the gold and green of the distant avenue, she answered, "I don't know. It's very difficult to decide. You see, it's so perfect here": adding, almost with a sigh: "But Glamis is perfect too."

With whatever zest she flung herself into the gaieties of London, she never regarded time spent at home as an interval for rest and recuperation. Some girls return to their families as ships go into dock for repairs. They are tired, and need a breathing space in which to retrim their beams before returning to social activities.

But to Queen Elizabeth, so far from being a place



## QUEEN ELIZABETH

of withdrawal, Glamis was the spot where life was most fully lived. It was not in her nature to economize vitality, to save it up for special occasions.

Ungrudging of her time and her energy, she was always ready to spend herself without stint, never "too tired" or "too busy" to respond to any claim.

The gay energy with which she ran the Forfarshire Girl Guides is wistfully remembered. As District Commissioner of Glamis and Eassie Parish, she formed the local association. She still takes an active interest in these Guides, but the encouragement of her constant fellowship is much missed. "The Duchess used to make it all such fun," said one of the leaders just after Queen Elizabeth's marriage.

It is not possible to give more than a very brief record of these years of the Queen's life, but a few incidents may be mentioned. During the early part of 1919 she was in London, where a surface cheerfulness was blossoming into pageants and processions. She was an interested spectator of President Wilson's triumphant drive and of Marshal Foch's great ovation and, from a window in the City, she watched the first post-war Lord Mayor's Show.

At the end of April she went to stay at Althorp to be bridesmaid to her great friend, Lady Lavinia Spencer, who was married in the village church to Lord Annaly.

May, June and July, Queen Elizabeth was in

## SOCIAL LIFE

London, eagerly enjoying the excitement of making new friends at dinners and dances, and, for the first time in her life, going to nearly as many theatres as she liked.

In the ballroom she was as much appreciated as she had been at the children's parties, and soon established the reputation of being "the best dancer in London."

Very often she used to motor down to Eton and spend happy afternoons with her brother, never forgetting to bring him an "Angel Cake," his favourite addition to tea.

She remembers a day of brilliant sunshine at Ascot, and there are many who recall seeing her there in a white lace frock and a hat with a distinct tendency to become a poke bonnet.

Most of her Sundays were spent in the green quiet of St. Paul's Waldenbury.

Though London had been great fun, when August came it was delightful to get into the night train and be rushed up to beloved Glamis, where there were hard tennis courts, a Scotch garden at its best, and old and new friends coming to stay.

Early in 1920 the house in St. James's Square was reluctantly given up. It was difficult to find a suitable substitute, and it was not until October that her parents finally decided upon 17 Bruton Street. Even then there were many alterations to be made, and for months the house was in the hands of workmen.

There was much entertaining at Glamis that

## QUEEN ELIZABETH

autumn; and a large party was given for the Forfar Ball. Lady Rose came home for some months from Malta, where her husband was stationed, and all the old gaieties were revived—singing, dancing, and dressing-up. Many have a vivid recollection of how lovely Queen Elizabeth looked one night in a rose brocade Vandyck dress with pearls in her hair.

At the end of August the present King, then the Duke of York, paid his first visit to Glamis, and there was a large party to meet him.

During his visit Princess Mary, who was reviewing Girl Guides, came over to Glamis several times from Cortacy, where she was staying with Lady Airlie.

At Christmas there was a family party at St. Paul's Waldenbury: no idle time for so conscientious an aunt as Queen Elizabeth, for the house swarmed with appreciative nephews and nieces.

In the spring there was Princess Mary's wedding, and in the Abbey, where at the next great pageant she was to be the central figure, Queen Elizabeth made one of the silver and white bridesmaids.

That same month she paid her first visit to Paris, staying at the British Embassy with her friend Diamond Hardinge. In brilliant spring sunshine, Paris was at its best and there was much to enjoy; sight-seeing, shopping, drives to Fontainebleau and Malmaison. A big ball was given at the British Embassy, and I have found a letter written at the time which gives a description of Queen Elizabeth

## QUEEN ELIZABETH AT A BALL

that night : " At last night's ball the rooms were perfect, and there were lots of pretty people in lovely gowns. The most charming sight there was Lady Elizabeth Lyon, a bewitching little figure in rose colour, which set off her lovely eyes and dark eyebrows to perfection. She seemed to me the incarnation of fresh, happy, English girlhood : so bright, so natural, with an absolutely enchanting smile and a look of indescribable goodness and sweetness, shot with a delicious gleam of humour and fun. Looking at her, I felt that she was just what should result from her sort of home atmosphere of family affection and fun, laughter, and music, and yet with a sense of the deep eternal realities of life as foundations to it all. That would account for the thoughtful look on the brow, the quiet inner radiance that her little face wears in repose, though superficially it would appear all sparkle and girlish fun. Certainly last night she stood out as an English rose, sweet and fresh as if with the dew still on it."

The second visit to Paris in June 1922 was a very different one. Diamond Hardinge, whose death in 1922 was so deeply mourned by Queen Elizabeth and many other devoted friends, was very ill after a serious operation. Cancelling all her engagements, Queen Elizabeth went out to her friend, and through a very trying time her presence was the greatest support.

The summer of 1921 was difficult for Queen Elizabeth. Her mother had been very ill in the

## QUEEN ELIZABETH

spring, and though it was thought that the summer at Glamis would restore her health, she grew worse, and for the time being became a complete invalid. Glamis was almost continuously full of guests, and the whole responsibility of entertaining them fell upon the young Lady Elizabeth. It was during this time that both Queen Mary and the Duke of York came to stay. Undismayed, Lady Elizabeth proved herself a perfect hostess.

In the autumn Lady Strathmore had to undergo an operation which caused her family the deepest anxiety. The strain was prolonged, for it was not until after a second operation in May 1922 that she began really to recover. During the whole of that winter and spring her daughter was anchored by duties to Glamis. All speak in the highest praise of the remarkable, cool efficiency with which she managed everything in the huge establishment simultaneously winning her spurs as housekeeper and hostess.

The success with which she coped with certain serious domestic crises proved the iron determination which is to some extent camouflaged by Queen Elizabeth's manner and smile. Whatever she undertakes is carried off with a gaiety and cordiality which cloaks the strength of her personality. But though she may fight with masked batteries, her purpose is nearly always fulfilled.

## CHAPTER FIFTEEN

FRIENDSHIPS— FAMILY LIFE





LADY STRATHMORE'S WEDDING PRESENT TO  
THE KING

*(From a miniature by Mabel Hankey)*





THE KING AND QUEEN ARRIVE AT GLAMIS  
ON THEIR HONEYMOON

*(Photograph by Topical Press)*

## CHAPTER FIFTEEN

**I**T is not surprising that Queen Elizabeth should have made and kept a large number of devoted friends. Besides her charm and her capacity for fun, she has the precious gift of making whoever is with her feel at their best, and this is a gift which never goes unappreciated.

She has another great qualification for friendship. Many women are amusing. Some are discreet. Very few are both. It is the rare alliance of these two qualities that Queen Elizabeth's friends find so invaluable.

In a letter, May 1927, one of her best friends gave some impressions of the Queen and life at Glamis before her marriage.

"After the Duchess grew up there were memorable parties at Glamis. The guests proposed themselves and, however unexpected, were welcomed by the family, whose everyday life supplied ample entertainment for all who came.

"In the evening, whenever possible, Lady Strathmore was persuaded to play the piano, and the beautiful fifteenth-century drawing-room would be dimly lit, except for the pool of light made by the candles on the instrument, which illuminated

## QUEEN ELIZABETH

the serene countenance of Lady Strathmore and the eager faces of those around her. On these occasions we would all sing, and topical songs which could be adapted to some person present were very popular. The Duchess's adaptations to suit the characters of her friends were excellent.

"With their great affection and tolerant good-humour, they were a delightful family to stay with : never unduly critical of the stranger within their gates, and wonderfully unruffled by circumstances, accepting and adapting any untoward incident as a further contribution to their own humorous edition of life. The power the Duchess has of calm self-control and unruffled serenity in facing the trivial harassing disturbances of existence helps her in times of real stress.

"I met her for the first time soon after she came out. I had already heard much about her charm, and looked forward to meeting her. She arrived in the afternoon at the house where I was staying, and I found her standing alone in front of the great Tudor fire-place—the rest of the party were out.

"She looked very pretty, and wore a hat with the faintest suggestion of a poke bonnet about it, and a ribbon under her chin. She always said the ribbon was to prevent her hat blowing off motoring, but I thought the head-dress was sufficiently becoming to be kept in constant use without the excuse of utility. At this, my first meeting, I felt at once the intense desire to please her, which I believe is universal among those in her company.

## FRIENDSHIPS

“ She always has been, and is, a remarkably good friend ; as incapable of an ungracious word as she is of an ungraceful movement, and though she can express opinions very trenchantly and has a great love of argument, her manner is always gentle and disarming. Her presence is heartening to a degree. Those she is with feel themselves all they would wish to be. If the desire of their heart is to be witty, they become scintillating. Whatever way they wish to succeed, when with her, they feel successful. In large companies of the shy and silent, she will launch one of those inexhaustible topics on which everyone wishes to talk : when discussions become exasperating, she can—with an act usually only practised to perfection by devoted Nannies, abruptly interject a remark of so arresting a character on some subject entirely remote from the one under discussion as to distract immediately and permanently the attention of all from the controversy. She has a very pretty and infectious laugh. Once before a big luncheon-party, a pompous and difficult one, she said, ‘ Can you laugh ? ’ ‘ Yes,’ answered her astonished friend. ‘ Will you laugh with me at luncheon, whenever I raise my left eyebrow ? Let us practise now.’ At given moments throughout that at first solemn meal her musical voice rose in seemingly natural mirth accompanied by a raucous peal of forced merriment, and all solemnity was soon at an end.

“ The first time I ever went to stay at St. Paul’s Waldenbury, the Duchess and I motored from

## QUEEN ELIZABETH

London together. The car, a stately Daimler limousine, could not have the hood lowered to let in the brilliant sunshine. The Duchess determined to make the most of the situation. Sitting bolt upright, she unfurled her umbrella, raised it between us and the roof of the car, and from beneath this canopy we both bowed and smiled to the astonished and, we hoped, delighted citizens of the Edgware Road !

“ The charming smile and gracious bow that she has since made so famous were as full of charm and grace during our pantomime performance that day as they are now, and I remembered it with amusement when I stood among the thousands who went to cheer her on her return from Australia, and watched her smiling and bowing from under an umbrella, made necessary on that day by the inclemency of the weather.”

Another friend writes of life at St. Paul's Waldenbury : “ I first met the Duchess at a children's party, where we sat next to each other at tea and compared, with the solemnity of two small girls on their best behaviour, the sizes of our respective families. Seeing that she herself was the youngest but one of ten children, I had suspected since that she chose this subject of conversation as giving her an almost certain advantage over a stranger.

“ It was some years before we met again, and I was invited to stay in her Hertfordshire home.

“ Life at St. Paul's Waldenbury centred round the lady of the house, upon whom its whole manage-

## FAMILY LIFE

ment seemed to depend. There were her grandchildren to be amused, and the Duchess was always the devoted playmate of her nephews and nieces. There was a beautiful garden ready to be enjoyed, and plenty of work always waiting to be done in it. There were dogs to be looked after and chickens to be fed. There was a tennis court out of doors and a much-used piano within. There was no extravagance or luxury ; no attempt to be modern or up to date. There was little apparent organization, save such as secured that the humblest local engagement should be scrupulously fulfilled.

“ This might be written of hundreds of other families following the self-contained round of an English country house. Yet if there be a genius for family life, it was surely found in that household. All the members of the family, whose numerical superiority had overawed me at our first meeting, were bound together by a contented and unspoiled affection that embraced also every friend who enjoyed the hospitality of the house.”



## CHAPTER SIXTEEN

### COURTSHIP—ENGAGEMENT





## CHAPTER SIXTEEN

TOWARDS the end of 1922, Lady Elizabeth Lyon became the subject of widespread interest.

It was known that the then Duke of York had fallen deeply in love with the "enchancing girl" with whom he was so often seen dancing, and it was stated that he intended to ask her to be his wife.

Conjecture was rife.

Would Lady Elizabeth feel that acceptance of the Prince's proposal would entail too great sacrifice of that independence and privacy which is the birthright of every subject? Would she be afraid to undertake a life of Royal duties? Would she decline? Would she accept?

Whatever qualms Lady Elizabeth may have felt, however great her misgivings as to her fitness to step into History: when the time for decision came, these qualms and misgivings ceased to be determining factors.

She found it was not a question of judgment, but of impulse. Feelings, not reasons, took command, and acceptance became inevitable. "I dare say she *was* very much afraid of the position, but

## QUEEN ELIZABETH

she just found she couldn't do without him," was the explanation given me by one of her most intimate girl friends.

On Saturday, January 13th, 1933, the Duke came to stay at St. Paul's Waldenbury. The next morning he and Lady Elizabeth decided not to accompany the other members of the party to church. They preferred to walk in the beloved wood of her childhood: "THE WOOD, the haunt of Fairies," with its "moss-grown statues" and "the BIG OAK," sacred to the memory of "Caroline-Curly-Love" and "Rhoda-Wrigley-Worm."

Before they left this glamorous wood, "where the sun always seemed to be shining," the Prince had declared his suit, and the "youngest daughter" in England's newest fairy-story had joyfully consented to begin to "live happily ever afterwards." . . .

On Monday morning the Duke returned to London. Later in the same day he went to Sandringham to tell his parents of the engagement, to which he had, of course, already obtained their provisional consent, and on the evening of January 16th the following announcement appeared in the *Court Circular* :

"It is with the greatest pleasure that the King and Queen announce the betrothal of their beloved son, the Duke of York, to the Lady Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon, daughter of the Earl and Countess of Strathmore, to which the King has gladly given his consent."

## ENGAGEMENT

The formal declaration of the King's consent to the wedding was made on February 12th, when the following document was signed by him at a special Meeting of the Privy Council, a procedure necessitated by the Royal Marriage Act of 1772 :

“Whereas by an Act of Parliament entituled ‘An Act for the better regulating the future Marriages of the Royal Family, it is amongst other things enacted “that no descendant of the body of His late Majesty King George II, Male or Female, shall be capable of contracting matrimony without the previous consent of His Majesty, His Heirs or Successors, signified under the Great Seal.”

“Now know ye that we have consented and by these Presents signify Our Consent to the contracting of Matrimony between His Royal Highness Albert Frederick Arthur George, Duke of York, and the Lady Elizabeth Angela Margaret Bowes-Lyon, youngest daughter of the Rt. Honourable Claude George, Earl of Strathmore and Kinghorne.”

It is interesting to note that it was over two and a half centuries since a Prince in direct succession to the British Throne had received the King's consent to his marriage with a subject. Curiously enough, the last to receive that permission was also a Duke of York—the brother of Charles II, afterwards James II. He, too, married an Earl's daughter, Anne Hyde, daughter of the historian Clarendon.

Though Henry VIII—an exception to all matrimonial rules—was the only King of England after

## QUEEN ELIZABETH

Edward IV married to a subject, yet during the early centuries of English history it was by no means an unusual thing for the sons and daughters of the reigning King to marry subjects. In those unsettled days, when the power of the great nobles was not yet broken, it was well worth the while of the Royal Family to seek wealth and power by alliances with some of the great noble houses. The Royal coffers were often replenished through the Nevilles, Mortimers, Tudors, and other families.

But with the coming of the Hanoverians the custom of intermarriage between the Royal Family and the nobility was superseded. Amongst the many regulations brought over with George I was the rule that a Royal Prince must marry a woman of Royal rank. If he chose to marry a subject the marriage did not exist officially, and his wife and children had no position.

The first sovereign to depart from this custom was Queen Victoria, who consented to the marriage of her daughter Princess Louise to the then Marquess of Lorne, and later to that of her grand-daughter, now the Princess Royal, to the Earl of Fife, whom she made a Duke at the breakfast table. The antiquated rule that members of the Royal House must only marry Royalties was finally abolished when King George V reverted to the ancient name of Windsor, and, sweeping away all the Germanic accretions that had grown to English law, decided that Royal blood was no longer a necessity in the marriages of his younger children, and announced

## ENGAGEMENT

that they could choose their wives and husbands from the families of the first three ranks of the nobility—dukes, marquesses, and earls.

To every girl the first days of her engagement are exciting days, to Lady Elizabeth they must have been more than bewildering. In a letter she wrote : “ I feel very happy, but quite dazed. We hoped we were going to have a few days’ peace first, but the cat is now completely out of the bag and there is no possibility of stuffing him back.”

The cat was indeed out of the bag. When Lady Elizabeth motored up to London, it was to see her name blazing from every poster and to find her home in Bruton Street raided by the Press, who continued to lay siege to it for the rest of the week.

She was at once snowed under by telegrams and letters, and from that day her post has never resumed normal dimensions.

Nearly every girl feels shy the first time she visits her future husband’s family. She suffers from an uncomfortable sense of being “ on approval.”

To have simultaneously to pay the homage due to a sovereign and to a father-in-law can scarcely have lessened the ordeal, and it must have been with considerable trepidation that Lady Elizabeth went to stay at Sandringham on the Sunday after her engagement ; but the glowing welcome given her by the King and the Queen soon set her at her ease, and ever since then the warm affection bestowed on her by every member of the Royal Family has

## QUEEN ELIZABETH

wonderfully smoothed for her a path which might have proved very difficult to tread.

That gentle happiness which surrounds her like an aura and diffuses itself around her, a happiness due to some inner radiance, made her a delightful acquisition to any family, and the King and Queen rejoiced that their son was to have the invaluable help of a wife in whom beauty and charm were allied to steadfastness and ability.

It was obvious that in marrying their son she would find full scope for the exercise of these qualities, for the Duke was already renowned for the unsparing way in which, without thought of self, he carried out whatever duties he felt called upon to assume. Known as the "Industrial Prince," he had well deserved this honourable title. At Cambridge he had studied "Civics"—a comprehensive subject—and became especially interested in public hygiene and the welfare of youth. He was the very active President of the Industrial Welfare Society, which has been described as existing "to put oil instead of grit into the machinery of Industry," and in this capacity frequently paid informal visits to factories to inspect and study conditions, especially the arrangements for the welfare of the workers. He always availed himself of an opportunity to talk to leaders of industry, whether employers or employed, and was an assiduous reader of periodicals and books on all labour questions, keeping a written record of anything important that he heard or read.

## ENGAGEMENT

In connection with the Industrial Welfare Society, he has long run an annual camp of about four hundred boys, two hundred of whom are selected from the Public Schools, the other two hundred being industrial boys.

The camp has always been held during the first week in August at New Romney, and each year he spent much time there talking to the boys and joining in all their games and sports. This he was well qualified to do, being a fine rider, swimmer and shot, and a remarkably good tennis player.

One who has been much in his company wrote in 1927: "H.R.H.'s keenness as a sportsman is most endearing. He will rise at any hour in order to procure shooting or fishing before starting the day's work, and after seven hours of official functions he will dash off to change for three hard sets of tennis before an official dinner. He likes playing with the best, and can hold his own with Wimbledon giants."

There was only a year's difference in age between the then Prince of Wales and the Duke of York, and the two brothers were brought up side by side, both being destined for the Navy. Many amusing anecdotes are told of our present King's childhood. Here is an example. One day King Edward VII was lunching with his son and daughter-in-law. During the meal King George VI—then little Prince Albert—made violent attempts to attract his grandfather's attention. King Edward, who was busy talking, gently admonished his grandson for



## QUEEN ELIZABETH

interrupting. "Don't talk, my boy, until we have finished luncheon."

The obedient boy subsided into silence.

When luncheon was over King Edward said : "Now, my dear, what is it you wanted to say to me ?"

"It doesn't matter, Grandpapa," was the dejected reply. "I was only going to tell you there was a caterpillar in your salad, but you've eaten it now."

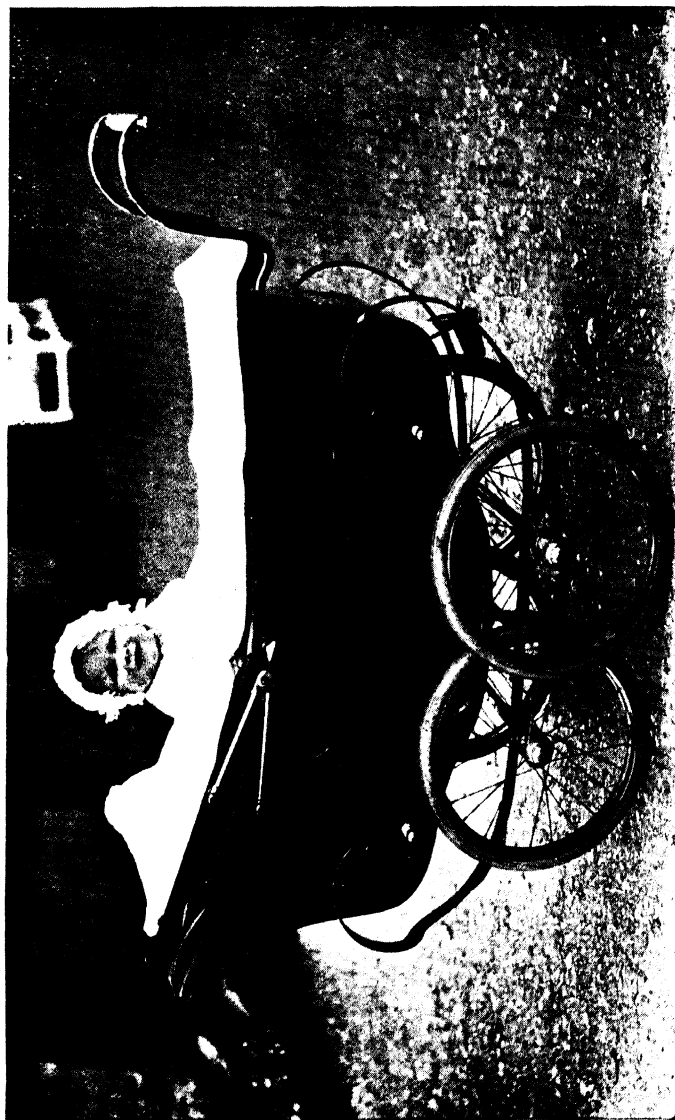
In 1909 King George VI entered Osborne at the age of thirteen, and followed the usual routine of a naval cadet. His war record, though well known, may be briefly repeated. At its outbreak he was serving as a midshipman in the *Collingwood* in the First Battle Squadron.

He took part in the Battle of Jutland, and was specially mentioned in Lord Jellicoe's dispatches. Soon after this, to his great regret, a serious operation compelled him to retire from the Navy. Later he joined the Royal Air Force and very soon obtained his pilot's certificate, ultimately receiving promotion to the rank of Group Captain, which he now holds.

The following extract from a letter written some years ago by a very distinguished soldier gives an interesting tribute : "It has been my privilege to be brought into close relations with the Duke of York, and I can only say that those relations could not have been more pleasant. The Duke appreciates the utmost frankness, and always met me more than half-way in any special request that I thought it necessary to make. In fact, there is in his character



MOTHER AND DAUGHTER  
*(Photograph by Speaight)*



PRINCESS ELIZABETH AT ST. PAUL'S WALDENBURY

*(Photograph by Hubert Thurston)*

## ENGAGEMENT

a very lovable trait—a striving for the right course and an intense desire for knowledge which, when acquired, he is equally anxious to pass on to those in authority or in high position—for he is nothing if not practical, and his speeches are full of suggestions for the wider diffusion of that knowledge for the greater benefit of the Empire.

“ Though apt to be shy socially, if he finds an interesting and congenial companion he becomes agreeably alert, and can talk with great intelligence and acumen.”

The news of this deservedly popular Prince's engagement to an English girl was greeted with wide rejoicing. Had the country known that, in addition to the charm and grace apparent to all, this young girl also brought to her Royal husband's aid a strength of character and a fund of wisdom known only to her intimates, the rejoicings would have been even greater.



## CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

### WEDDING



## CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

**I**N the days of the Strathmores' ancestors the dowry of the family used to be " half a moonlit night "; that is to say, half the booty that the knights could steal on a roystering moonlit night.

No doubt the preparations then made for a family wedding were very simple. Those made for the wedding of the twentieth-century descendant of those lawless knights were correspondingly elaborate. The following notice gives some idea of the picturesque formalities that precede a Royal wedding.

" As soon as the date for the Royal wedding has been fixed and the place for the ceremony decided upon, arrangements will be made at the Archbishop of Canterbury's Faculty Office for the engrossing of the marriage licence.

" The document will be prepared by the veteran clerk of the Faculty Office, Mr. Bull, who for fifty years has been writing ordinary licences and engrossing Royal licences. For three days he will stoop over a roll of parchment nearly a yard square in a locked room. He will use nearly twenty quill pens of various thicknesses and will write the licence in old English lettering with black ink."

Accompanied by the Duke, the future Queen



## QUEEN ELIZABETH

went up to Glamis for a few days, and from there they visited Edinburgh.

Except for some visits to Sandringham, she spent all the rest of the time between her engagement and her marriage in London. Eight bridesmaids were chosen—two children—her little nieces Cecilia Lyon and Elizabeth Elphinstone—and six of her friends : Lady Mary Cambridge, Lady Catherine Hamilton, Lady May Cambridge, Lady Mary Thynne, Miss Diamond Hardinge, and Miss Betty Cator.

Hundreds of letters had to be answered, and presents poured in, often presented by deputations of the donors. Bandbox by bandbox the simple but very beautiful trousseau was gradually accumulated in Bruton Street, and much of it was wonderfully worked at home by a very fine needlewoman, employed for years in the family. The lovely wedding-dress was of ivory chiffon mousmé, with pearl embroideries on cloth of silver : a narrow panel of this silver and embroidery falling between the shoulders at the back to gleam through the long bridal veil of exquisite old lace lent by Queen Mary.

April 26th dawned wet and dull, but in the course of the morning pale sunshine gradually filtered through the greyness. The crowds deserved the comfort of its warmth, for they had not waited to see what the weather might hold in store. The glamour of the occasion had been sufficient invitation. The chill wan hours of early morning had found them eagerly assembled : and Whitehall, that

## WEDDING

highway of history, had never been thronged with denser or more patient crowds.

Young and old had come forth in their thousands to share with ungrudging sympathy in the joy of another man and woman, a joy accessible to every human being, but for these two, whom Chance had set on high, made memorably beautiful by the pomp and pageantry so dear to the English.

In Parliament Square flags were flying and green garlands swinging in the wind. Outside the Abbey the high wooden stands held thousands of spectators, and from every lamp-post determined boys hung in grape-like clusters.

Mounted policemen moved about, gently backing their excited horses into bulging sections of the perfectly behaved crowd, and St. John Ambulance men wheeled their stretchers up and down the line, searching for victims of too-prolonged standing.

As the hour of the wedding approached, the calm majesty of the Abbey, where the dead still keep their state, was gradually invaded by a motley crowd of the living. Soldiers, Statesmen, Indian Princes, Labour Members, Diplomats ; a moving mass of colour, they slowly filed in and were ushered to their seats by scarlet men-at-arms carrying pikes.

From the great organ came the sounds of Purcell's beautiful suite, its strains slowly floating up to wander and stray among the echoes in the dim upper spaces, whose mystery was pierced by the long shafts of light ; long shafts that scattered through the twilight of the arches the fragments of

## QUEEN ELIZABETH

a broken rainbow, and touched the gilded reredos of the altar, on which golden vessels glistened and candles palely flickered.

Even in this dim religious light the brilliancy of the massed uniforms was dazzling. The gorgeous clash of scarlet, silver, blue and gold, the shining swords and medals, the jewelled turbans : all these united to reduce the wedding garments of the women to insignificance.

The music ceased. Expectancy grew. In solemn splendour of crimson and gold the Clergy thronged into the Sanctuary.

The Archbishop of Canterbury with his glittering staff took up his stand before the altar. From far away came the sound of distant cheering : louder and louder, until it burst in a roar that echoed against the Abbey walls. The great assembly rose to receive the King and Queen, and the Royal procession took their seats in the chairs on the right of the altar.

Another great burst of cheering greeted the bridegroom. Between his two brothers he advanced up the aisle. Impulsively Queen Alexandra rose and embraced her three grandsons. The bridegroom's ordeal of waiting is not long, for soon the loudest cheer of all is heard. The most poignant moment of every wedding has come.

The bride is here.

Startlingly, piercingly sweet rise the choir boys' voices—"Lead us, Heavenly Father, lead us," and through the wide-open doors to which all eyes are

## WEDDING

turned she enters with her white following. It is as though those doors were letting in the Spring.

Her father takes her by the hand, and slowly they advance up the nave. Before them a golden cross is carried high. As she reaches the steps the bridegroom moves to her side, and they face the altar together, the sun shining full on their bowed heads as the familiar ritual is spoken.

The Archbishop of York addresses them in words of grave gentleness, and then they move into King Edward the Confessor's Chapel to sign the register while the strains of " God Save the King " fill the Abbey.

Soon the bride and bridegroom reappear. Her veil is now thrown back, and from her face shine radiance and gentle resolution, as hand in hand with her husband she walks out to face the cheering crowds and her future on the great stage of English History.



## CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

THE WHITE LODGE—THE NEW PRINCESS—  
A ROYAL CHRISTENING



## CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

**F**OR the first days of their honeymoon the Duke and Duchess of York went to stay at Polesden Lacey, the beautiful home of Mrs. Ronald Greville. From there, after an afternoon spent with the Duchess's parents in Bruton Street, they travelled up to Glamis. Here, as may be imagined, they were given an enthusiastic welcome. Cheering crowds thronged into the station to greet the Prince and his bride, and under the restraining eye of the station-master the Duchess's own troupe of Girl Guides, possessively proud, lined up to meet their District Commissioner's train.

In the familiar beauty of the Scottish home of her childhood the Duke and Duchess stayed until towards the end of May, when they travelled south to spend the last fortnight of their honeymoon at Frogmore.

About the middle of June they settled into their new home in Richmond Park: the White Lodge, given up to them by Lord Farquhar, a former Master of the Household. During their absence in Scotland Queen Mary had been very busy preparing the house for her son and daughter-in-law. This labour of love must have stirred many memories,



## QUEEN ELIZABETH

for White Lodge had been the scene of her own childhood, having for twenty-eight years been the home of her mother the Duchess of Teck. It was also the birthplace of the Prince of Wales, who was born whilst Queen Mary, then Duchess of York, was staying with her parents.

Within so short a distance from London, a more delightful dwelling could scarcely be found. A square-built Georgian house with spacious rooms, it stands in a large garden on one of the most beautiful sites in Richmond Park. On this site there was originally a small hunting-box built by George I, from a design by the Earl of Pembroke, "as a place of refreshment after the fatigues of the Chase." George II's wife, Queen Caroline, to whom we owe the Serpentine in Hyde Park, fell in love with the hunting-box and its surroundings, and built the present centre block with its classical pillars on the garden front. When Princess Amelia, daughter of George II, was made Ranger of the Park and came to live there, it was decided to enlarge the house, and two pavilion blocks, connected to the house by quadrant passages, were added. The building of these two wings, begun by Princess Amelia, was finished by Lord Bute, who succeeded her as Ranger of the Park.

It will be remembered that Sir Walter Scott made White Lodge the setting for the famous scene in *The Heart of Midlothian*, when Jeanie Deans, in an interview with Queen Caroline, pleads for her sister's life. During Jeanie Deans' journey to the

## THE NEW PRINCESS

Queen, the Duke of Argyll points out to her the beauties of the view from Richmond Hill. "This is a fine scene," says he. "We have nothing like it in Scotland." "It's braw rich feeding for the cows," replies Jeanie.

To give but one of the many interesting historical associations of this house: In 1805, when Mr. Addington, later Lord Sidmouth, was living there, Nelson visited him, and, with a finger dipped in wine, traced on a table (now preserved at Up-Ottery Manor) the tactics he subsequently used at Trafalgar.

Its well-shaded lawns, rose gardens, lily pond, and fine tennis courts make White Lodge an ideal summer residence. In such surroundings weeks could have been spent in happy idleness, but the part the new Princess had, by her marriage, undertaken, soon proved a very exacting one to play. Her smiling presence was ceaselessly clamoured for, and little time was left her for the enjoyment of her own home.

Each day she was asked to become Patroness of several societies, to visit hospitals, to lay foundation stones. Every sort of appeal poured in, and each one had to be seriously considered and answered. The daily post became a very formidable factor in her life. Then there were Court Functions to attend, and visits to be paid with her husband to Industrial Centres, visits that sometimes involved a stay of two days.

As may be imagined, these new interests and activities left little leisure for lotus-eating in Richmond Park.

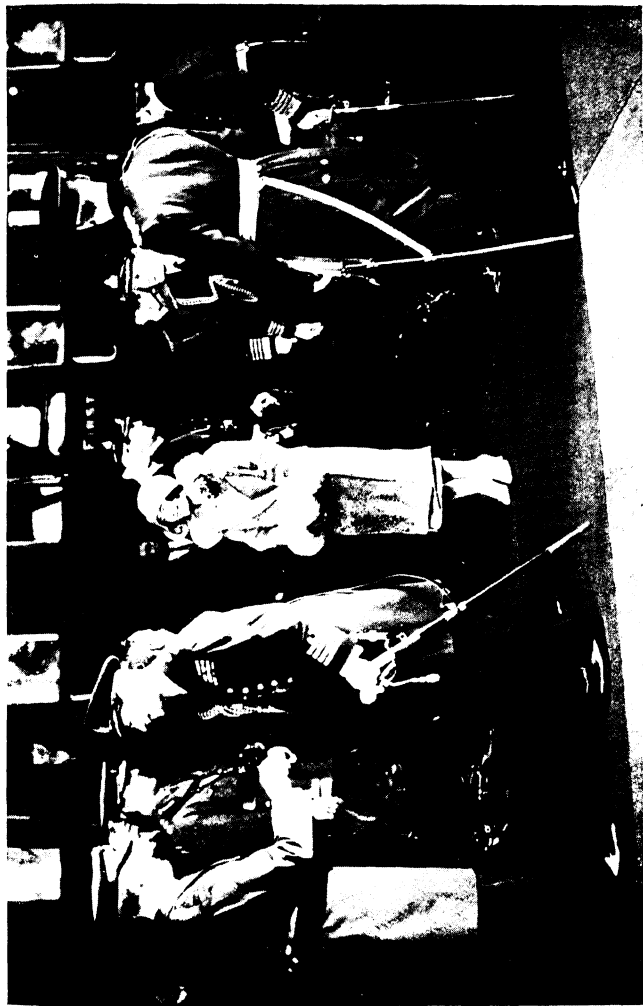
## QUEEN ELIZABETH

To find herself the central figure at large gatherings would have alarmed the average girl into awkwardness. It was like being suddenly called upon to act a leading part without any rehearsal ; to be the *prima donna* at your debut. But of any shyness the new Princess may have felt, there were no outward signs, and from the very outset of her career there was no resisting the contagion of the happiness she diffused around her.

However, as she never does anything superficially, but, so to speak, smiles with her whole being, each undertaking involves a great expense of vitality, and by the end of July she was very tired and very glad to go up to Scotland, first, as in every August of her life, to Glamis, and later to Balmoral.

Early in October she and her husband returned to White Lodge, and on the morning of the 18th they started on the three-days' journey to Serbia, where the Duke of York acted as godfather to the infant son of King Alexander and Queen Marie. They stayed there two days, being guests at a house-warming party, for the Serbian Royal Family had only just arrived at the vast new palace built on the site of the old one, which had been bombarded and destroyed by the Austrians in 1914.

To be the godfather of a Serbian baby is no sinecure, for it entails the responsibility of supervising the child's education, and later on the godson has to obtain his godfather's consent to his choice of a bride. Neither was the Duke a lay figure during the elaborate ritual of the christening.



THE KING AND QUEEN LEAVE FOR AUSTRALIA

*(Photograph by Topical Press)*



THE FAMOUS SMILE  
(*London Electrotape Agency*)

## A ROYAL CHRISTENING

Before becoming a Christian called Peter, the baby had much to undergo. His godfather carried him into the chapel and held him through the first part of the service, until his grandmother, the Queen of Roumania, "unswathed" him. The Duke then handed him to the Patriarch for total immersion in the font. After this the new Christian was anointed, and a cross was put round his neck by his grandmother; then the Duke, preceded by a deacon with a thurible, had to carry him three times round the altar. The complicated ceremony ended with the cutting of a lock of hair from the baby's head.

The new Duchess of York's ever-increasing popularity kept her very busy during the autumn and winter. The number of her engagements made the distance of White Lodge from London seem more and more of a drawback: and when, at the beginning of the season of 1924, Princess Mary, at that time in her Yorkshire home, suggested that the Duke and Duchess should live for a time at Chesterfield House, the offer was gladly accepted. From this convenient base a mosaic of engagements were undertaken and carried out.

During July the Duke and Duchess paid an official visit to Northern Ireland, staying first at Clandeboyne and then with the Governor-General at Baron's Court.

They then went to Scotland, returning to make the necessary preparations for their expedition to East Africa.



# CHAPTER NINETEEN

## A HOLIDAY





## CHAPTER NINETEEN

THE Duke and Duchess of York—as for the present we will call them—spent a day or two attending functions in each capital, but their expedition to East Africa was not an official tour. Its purposes were change and shooting, both of which were amply provided by the countries they visited.

To the Duchess, who had never been further abroad than France and Italy, these months of open-air life and adventurous travel were a wonderful experience. As a companion, she took with her Lady Annay, one of her greatest friends from childhood. The Duke was escorted by Captain B. V. Brooke and Lieut.-Commander Buist.

Before starting, they were busily engaged in planning details, studying maps, consulting books of reference and buying guns and kit.

At last all was ready, and they left England on December 1st. For those interested in travel I will give a brief account of the whole expedition. They sailed from Marseilles on the *Mulbera* on the 5th, and arrived at Mombassa on the 22nd. There they were met by the Governor of Kenya, Sir Robert Coryndon, with whom they drove round

## QUEEN ELIZABETH

the town, lunched at Government House, and afterwards attended a garden-party and a "ngoma," or native dance, which was held in a large open square.

That same night they left in the Governor's special train for Nairobi, Kenya.

During this journey they saw, about sixty miles distant, the magnificent snow-capped Kilimanjaro, and passed through the famous Athi plains. While the train was going through the Game Reserve, the Duke and Duchess sat on a seat on the front of the engine and, fascinated, watched all kinds of fantastic animals scurrying across the track. They stayed three days at Nairobi and then drove to Embu, where they were welcomed by the local chiefs and their tribes in all the fierce magnificence of war-paint and feathers. They spent the night sleeping in little huts scattered over the lovely plains, and starting early the next morning towards Meru drove in pouring rain through forests and vast undeveloped tracts. The cars had to ford swollen rivers. One of them was soon water-logged, and seven of the party had to squeeze themselves into one small Buick. It was very late before they reached the camp in which they were to spend a few days before setting out on *safari*.

The Duchess used to get up very early and assiduously practise shooting at a target with her rifle, a .275 Rigby. No one was more surprised than herself to find she had that mysterious thing, a "good eye," but it immediately asserted itself, and

## A HOLIDAY

she very soon became a remarkably good shot. In the wilds of Africa it is necessary to be able to shoot, as each time you walk round a bush you may meet a lion face to face, an unpleasing encounter if you are unarmed. Their first camp was on a very large plain facing the eighty-miles-distant Mount Kenya. Here they slept in small bamboo huts and ate in a big *banda* or open-sided shed.

There were myriads of wonderful jewel-like birds and butterflies ; ostriches roamed round the camp, and all night long the travellers could hear the roar of lions and the gallop of zebras.

In this district wet weather is unusual in these months, but on January 8th it rained in torrents and went on for two or three days. Fortunately the huts were fairly watertight, but walking became very difficult, for the camp was on black cotton soil which, when wet, becomes extremely slippery.

On the 9th of January they went off on *safari*, which meant living in tents, travelling very light, and moving camp practically every day until they reached Siola. They would strike camp at 5.30 in the morning and march till noon over terribly hard going of lava rock and thick bush. The Duchess nearly always accompanied the Duke on his shooting expeditions, and when he had shot the specimen, armed with field-glasses and cameras they spent many happy hours studying and photographing the wonderful herds of animals that still roam the vast plains and thick bush.

## QUEEN ELIZABETH

During these weeks of camp life the time-table of a shooting day would be :

5.15 a.m.	Called.
5.45 „	Tea and a biscuit.
5.50 „	Leave camp for morning shoot.
11.0 „	Return to camp.
11.30 „	Breakfast ? Lunch ?
3.30 p.m.	Leave camp for afternoon shoot.
6.30 „	Return camp, bath and change.
7.30 „	Dinner.
9.30 „	Bed.

The wonderful climate—glowing hot days and refreshingly cold nights—made camp life very enjoyable.

On February 4th they returned to Nairobi, leaving it on the 7th to set out for Uganda and the long trek down the Nile.

They stayed a few days with Lord and Lady Francis Scott in the delightful house they have built at Rangai, and on February 27th very regretfully said good-bye to their companions and to Kenya, and embarked in a small boat to cross Victoria Nyanza, the huge lake that is just large enough to hold the whole of Ireland. On their way across the Lake the Duke and Duchess stopped at Jinja to see the source of the White Nile at the Ripon Falls.

On the afternoon of February 13th they arrived at Entebbe, where they were met by natives in racing canoes singing their tribal songs. Here they

## A HOLIDAY

remained for three days, staying at Government House and spending one day at Kampala, the native capital, where they visited the King of Uganda and received gifts of ivory and skins.

From Entebbe they went on to Fort Portal, where a "lukiko" (a native parliament) was held and presents and addresses exchanged. After one night's rest they left Fort Portal, which lies right under the Mountains of the Moon, and descended the escarpment into the Semliki Valley. Here, instead of in tents, they slept in queerly shaped mud huts made by the natives of different coloured clays and painted with entertaining designs of animals and hunting weapons.

To reach their next camp they had to walk fifteen miles through this valley, where Solomon is said to have collected the ivory which he gave to the Queen of Sheba. The grass was very dry at that time, and they saw several destructive bush-fires. The only drinking-water they could procure was of a dark coffee colour and full of mud. Before it could be drunk it had to be strained with alum, a process which turned it an even more unpleasing colour, but its taste was not unbearable. On February 25th they came to a tiny landing-place on Lake Albert, and boarded the *Samuel Baker*, on which they were sorely tried by mosquitoes, and it was so hot that every one slept on deck.

They reached Nimule, and after motoring in Fords over a rough track they joined the steamer *Nasir*, in which they progressed down the White

## QUEEN ELIZABETH

Nile for five weeks. The *Nasir* was a very comfortable boat, and the inevitable mosquitoes were the only drawback. The party often disembarked and camped on shore for a few days at a time in search of various game. On these occasions natives—magnificent specimens of humanity—used to arrive in full dress and dance a welcome.

The last night they spent in camp was no rest cure. A wild wind blew up. Rain fell in torrents. The Duchess's tent fell in twice, and she and all her belongings were drenched.

Disembarking at Tonga, they motored up into the mountains to see a march past of twelve thousand Nubians, followed by a display of wrestling, spear-throwing, and dancing. At Kodok, the local King appeared, bringing the Duke and Duchess shields and other gifts, and his tribe danced their famous "lion dance"—a pantomime of a lion hunt, in which two of the performers represent the prey, wearing masks and carrying lions' tails, and a third is the hyena. They also waged a mock battle, hurling assegais and dexterously stopping them on their shields. They moved with marvellous grace, and their wild tribal songs were strangely eerie.

On April 6th the Duke and Duchess were met by the Governor of the Province at Kosti, and went by train to Makwar to see the great dam which was then practically finished. It is a huge concrete structure, the factory for making the concrete alone having cost £200,000. Its object is to dam the Blue Nile in order to irrigate the land for cotton-growing.

## A HOLIDAY

At Khartoum the Duke and Duchess inspected some troops and attended an evening reception in the beautiful gardens. Their last adventure was in the Suez Canal, when they were held up by a sandstorm, and the passage was prolonged from twelve to twenty-four hours.

In the middle of April they reached London, the richer for imperishable memories and a large number of fine "heads." Of those that fell to the Duchess's rifle, the best was the Rufifrous Gazelle, which she shot in the Soudan. This measured over thirteen inches on the front curve of the horn.

During these adventurous travels she proved herself a very hardy campaigner and a lightning "quick-change artist."

The agility with which she could readjust herself to the occasional demands of polite society that punctuated the uncivilised weather-beaten life they led and, substituting a parasol for a gun, smilingly appear looking as though she had never left London, was wonderful.

One of her fellow-travellers wrote: "During our African tour the Duchess showed her great versatility by thoroughly enjoying the various *safaris* and shoots, proving herself an exceptionally good shot, and in her enthusiasm often walking fifteen miles through rough bush country where the going was of the hardest. Day after day T.R.H. would set off from camp long before dawn, each carrying rifle, field-glasses and ammunition, returning at sunset after an exciting stalk to a meal consisting



## QUEEN ELIZABETH

of their day's bag. On several occasions the Duchess, after spending some weeks in camp, wearing the usual *safari* clothes, and living *entirely* out of doors, had to return to complete and formal civilisation—a great change, but one which did not in the least worry her, as she would appear in a quarter of an hour looking as though she had never been motoring miles in a Ford over roads which in England would be considered impassable, or creeping through thorn bush and wading waist-high in a swamp."

## CHAPTER TWENTY

WORK—PRINCESS ELIZABETH—AUSTRALIA



## CHAPTER TWENTY

**A**FTER this wonderful holiday the Duchess of York returned to a very strenuous home life. Her radiant presence was more in demand than ever, and she consented to grace a great many ceremonies.

Eight a day, I am told, was the average number of the functions that she was asked to attend. Naturally only a small proportion of these requests could be granted, but each had to be carefully considered. Assisted by her lady-in-waiting, she always dealt with her correspondence in the early morning, and every single letter she received was scrupulously answered.

As she joined to her sense of public duty the determination to keep in close touch with all the friends of her girlhood, it was clear that her life must be very full. It was during the crowded summer of 1925 that she accompanied her husband on several important visits to the huge industrial towns in the North of England. Here there were vast crowds eager to catch a glimpse of the smiling Princess, who looked so happy that the contagion spread and everyone began to beam. As she drove past, men and women shouted endearing epithets, and those who were too poor to

## QUEEN ELIZABETH

buy flags decorated their houses with red flannel petticoats and their children's frocks.

For the early autumn of 1925 the Duchess went with the Duke to her beloved Scotland, spending a month at Glamis and a month at Balmoral. After their return to London they lived for a few weeks in Curzon House, Curzon Street, and in the spring they decided to go for some time to her parents' house in Bruton Street. Here, on April 21st, 1926, her baby girl, now Heir Presumptive, was born. Little Princess Elizabeth was welcomed with general rejoicings, and the quiet house in Bruton Street became one of the sights of London. From morning to night groups of optimists patiently stood on the opposite pavement, eagerly hoping to catch sight of the small white bundle that was "the fourth lady in the land," and, for the time being, third in succession to the throne of England.

Thus the aunt of long apprenticeship was promoted to rapturous motherhood, and found it so absorbing a vocation that the first happy weeks and months rushed past, and all too soon the winter came and with it the necessity to make a great sacrifice.

The Duke of York was to go on an Imperial mission to open the first Parliament held in the new Australian capital—Canberra. Naturally his wife must accompany him, and this meant leaving Princess Elizabeth, then only eight months old, and missing no less than half a year of her delicious babyhood.



QUEEN ELIZABETH WITH HER FIRST CATCH IN  
AUSTRALIA



QUEEN ELIZABETH ARRIVES AT MELBOURNE

## PRINCESS ELIZABETH

Had the chance come earlier in her life the Duchess would have welcomed the prospect of going round the world, but now that strong strands, newly twisted, of motherly love and anxiety tethered her, severance was agony. During this separation the perfect plaything she was leaving must inevitably change out of all recognition. Those early phases are so swift, babies so fickle to their own changing charms. How many thousand laughs she must miss, how many delicious "ways" and enthralling beginnings! First words—first steps—first "Let's pretend." None of these would she see. Neither could she hope to be remembered.

Though it was with an aching heart that Queen Elizabeth set forth to "put a girdle round the earth," she showed no outward repining. Never had she radiated happiness more successfully than during the long weeks of the voyage.

Entering into all the amusements of life on board ship, she added the rôle of dancing mistress to her other activities; but the voyage and the whole of the Australian visit have been so well and so fully described by Mr. Darbyshire in his official book on the Royal tour, that no purpose would be served by giving an account of them in these pages.

The programme of their tour and the enthusiasm with which the Royal party were received in every town they visited is now well known; how well her Duke played his part is also common knowledge, but a few words about the Duchess in this connection may add a little fresh colour to her portrait.



## QUEEN ELIZABETH

Though deeply interesting and most enjoyable, it must be admitted the tour was a very exhausting experience. The time was so short for the length of the programme, and the days had to be terribly overcrowded. This made it a great and continuous strain, especially on one so unsparing of her own vitality as Queen Elizabeth.

All speak in the highest praise of the indefatigable spirit she displayed, also of her ceaseless consideration for her companions and efforts to save them fatigue she never sought to spare herself. She could not bear to disappoint any expectations, and it was a great grief to her when the Doctor pronounced her to be suffering from a severe attack of tonsillitis and absolutely forbade her to accompany the Duke to South Island. Before succumbing to this illness she had behaved with dangerous fortitude. For three days she had concealed her sufferings, and though she had a very high temperature, of which she told no one, had motored all day long on a dusty road, smiling as radiantly as ever and refusing to have the hood of the car up.

Her companions only began to suspect her illness through noticing that she talked less and accepted every decision without that friendly argumentativeness which is natural to her.

It was equally characteristic that whatever the fierceness of the sun she always persisted in wearing a hat with an upturned brim so that her face should not be hidden.

At one place amongst the huge crowd assembled

## AUSTRALIA

to greet her, she recognized a soldier who had been a patient at Glamis, and immediately sent for him to come and shake hands with her. That it was not possible to shake hands with everyone who wished for it was one of her continual regrets. Had she done so, her knuckles would have been ground to powder. It was of course necessary to treat each gathering, large or small, in the same way, so it was decided that she should not shake hands except with people who were formally presented. At the last public appearance she joyfully exclaimed : " Ah ! this time we can shake hands with everybody. There aren't more than a thousand people and, as it's the last time, we needn't worry about making a precedent ! "

In various towns she came across several of the officers who had stayed at Glamis during the war, and they were delighted to meet the Princess they so well remembered as the gay child who used to sing to them, run races with them, coolly drive a pair of thoroughbreds which many of her guests thought twice about handling and, when the head gardener was not looking, lead raids on the hot-houses for grapes.

The impression she made on a resident in Australia may be of interest, so I quote from a letter written to me at the time by a friend now living at Melbourne :

" Rumour had reached us in Melbourne of the embarrassingly loyal behaviour of some of the other towns. Friends brought news of hustling and

## QUEEN ELIZABETH

jostling of the Royal party ; of crowds pushing up everywhere, and even of the Duchess's dress being so fingered by the curious that it was unfit for further use. Melbourne was determined to show its superior courtesy, and the Government House Ball was certainly quite decorous. Naturally we were all consumed with curiosity and used our eyes with all our might, but the Royal lady was not disturbed or ruffled by the attentions of the guests.

“ It is astounding that so small a form can carry such dignity with it, and as she moved through the crowd, or danced with a favoured few, there was a space about her all the time. People were intrigued because Her Royal Highness danced and sat out with one partner who had no uniform or orders, and only the medals which show war service from 1914 to the end. A pretty story hangs on this. All through the War, Lord and Lady Strathmore were kind to overseas officers, and among these was a young engineer officer from Tasmania who had seen service in Egypt, at the Dardanelles, and in France. The Strathmores were extremely good to him and invited him on several occasions to spend his leave at Glamis. He liked Lady Elizabeth immensely, and when he went back to France she wrote to him from time to time. Letters had such value to men who were twelve thousand miles from home. Lady Strathmore had also been more than kind, and would get up early on dark winter morning to give him breakfast before he got the train back to the Channel and the front. So he had very

## AUSTRALIA

grateful memories of all the family, and though he was very busy making a business for himself when the War was over and had a wife and young family to care for, he never forgot Lady Elizabeth, and kept all her letters and snapshots of her.

“ When he heard of her marriage he felt it less likely than ever that he would ever see her again in her new and important position, and when the Royal visit to Australia was announced, he felt diffident about making himself known to her. However, he wrote to her (after tremendous family consultations as to the correct way to address a Royal Highness) and told her how happily he remembered his visits to Glamis and how he hoped to see her at some of the official functions. For some days there was no answer—indeed, he did not expect one, knowing the crowded life she was leading—but at length a telephone message came from Government House to say that H.R.H. wanted him to come to see her the following day. It was a delightful visit, for the Duchess had him in her sitting-room for a long talk, and so successfully laid the weight of royalty aside that he could have fancied himself at Glamis again with the friend he had known. When she dismissed him she told him she wanted to dance with him that night at the ball and would send for him. And accordingly that evening an A.D.C. fetched him and took him up to the dais, and when the Duke of York came up, she said: ‘I want to introduce my husband to you.’ ”

## QUEEN ELIZABETH

“ That is the explanation of why her first and second partners were the Governor-General and Prime Minister, and the third a civilian with no signs of glory.

“ We were amused by the copies of the Duchess and her hats which filled the streets during her visit. Every girl with any pretence to looks had bought or ‘ made over ’ a hat with a turned-up brim and a bunch of feathers at one side and was smiling more or less attractively. On one occasion the first prize for fancy dress went to a couple of girls who dressed as the Duke and Duchess—one in the inevitable hat and the other in a borrowed naval uniform, and I feel convinced that the prizes were given on loyal and sentimental grounds.

“ I feel certain that the Royal visit did a great deal of good. It is impossible to realise how cut-off one is in Australia if you haven’t been there, and a personal visit makes an enormous difference.

“ We all felt for Her Royal Highness in the crowded days that she had to spend, and we all marvelled at the grace and courage that carried her through them.”

# CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

PRINCESS ELIZABETH



## CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

TOWARDS the end of June, as the *Renown* approached the English shore, the baby Princess Elizabeth might well have sung :

“ I see a ship a-sailing  
A-sailing o’er the sea,  
And it is deeply laden  
With pretty things for me.”

Surely no ship was ever more deeply laden with treasures for one child. At every halt in their progress, presents to take home to their daughter had been showered on the Duke and Duchess, and the *Renown* returned a veritable Argosy, bearing in her hold nearly *three tons* of toys, ornaments, knick-knacks and gewgaws of every description, dolls far larger than the Princess herself, and a regiment of giant teddy bears.

The *Renown* also brought to the little Princess two singing canaries, twenty squawking parrots, and a real live father and mother ; a father and mother so eager for sight of their child that a new set of her photographs had been sent out to them by every mail !

Lent to devoted grandparents during these six



## QUEEN ELIZABETH

months, Princess Elizabeth, in the clever charge of the nurse who brought up her mother, had never had so much as a cold in the head. She had thrived in every sense of the word, and developed into a personality. At eighteen months of age she already knew how to smile strangers into slavery, and would hold out her arms to a crowd just as though it were one chocolate that she wanted to put in her mouth !

Babies can be so crushing ; seldom troubling to soften your fall if you fail to amuse them. Not so the little Princess Elizabeth. If she saw—and she was very quick to see—that you were trying to be funny, she always rewarded your efforts with a radiant smile. Perhaps she had inherited her mother's instinctive courtesy ? Or perhaps she was blessed with the facility of being pleased as well as of pleasing ? Certainly she was endowed with an enviable natural serenity, and her social gifts were very remarkable.

This golden-crested “little friend of all the world,” whose complexion of transparent fairness and brilliant blue gaze had captivated London, was already inconvenienced by her popularity, for owing to her perambulator being mobbed by importunate admirers she had been obliged to give up her agreeable outings in the Park.

On the afternoon of June 27th, 1927, Princess Elizabeth was dressed in her finest frock and taken from her new home in Piccadilly to Buckingham Palace.

Here she heard a strangely loud noise, and when

## PRINCESS ELIZABETH

she asked its cause, she was told that it was the kind people saying how glad they were that her father and mother had come home safely. "Father" and "Mother" were pictures in frames that lived in the nursery, so she was puzzled by this information. "There's Mother!" at last she hears the Queen say, and now she sees a very pretty excited lady who exclaims, "Oh! you darling!"

How will the baby receive this strange mother? It is an anxious moment.

All is well. Princess Elizabeth seems almost as delighted with her mother as if she were quite a large crowd. Her round face breaks into a wide smile and her arms go out.

Two wishes rose in the heart as one saw this enchanting pair of smiling Elizabeths reunited. That the daughter might grow to resemble her mother, and that for the mother the summer of life might prove no less fair than its spring.



## CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

SOCIAL WORK—CHILD WELFARE—A GIRLS' CLUB—  
CLEARING THE SLUMS—ROYAL ACADEMY OF  
DRAMATIC ART—ROYAL SCHOOL OF ART NEEDLE-  
WORK



## CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

**A**S soon as she returned from Australia, Queen Elizabeth blithely resumed her work as Duchess of York. Since her marriage each post had brought requests that she should become the Patroness or President of several societies. All these requests were carefully considered before they were answered. Refusing to be a mere figurehead, she never allowed her name to be associated with any concern in which she was unable to play an active part. To accept the office of President is, she rightly considers, to undertake a serious responsibility, and this she never does without making exhaustive enquiries into the purposes and methods of the society in question.

To her the rôle of President involves industrious service. A glance at her engagement books of this period shows how often she was engaged in this service. So large a proportion of her time was devoted to the obligations she had incurred, that any attempt to describe her life must include an account of some of the most important societies with which she was associated ; an account which will include glimpses of her in official capacities, and personal

## QUEEN ELIZABETH

impressions culled from various first-hand witnesses of the discharge of her diverse duties.

To begin with the care of the very young. In the healthy air of Highgate stands a beautiful Jacobean building called Cromwell House, and I advise anyone interested in the welfare of the very latest generation to visit this wonderfully picturesque headquarters of the Mothercraft Training Society.

Here the students are not taught to rely on hospital conditions and made dependent on equipment unavailable in ordinary homes. As is pointed out : "The Society trains mother and nurses, both boarders and out-patients, to use with care and intelligence the things present in even the humblest homes."

Besides teaching mothers their duty, this Society also shows babies how to give satisfaction. Cromwell House has a large number of cots ready for babies who, owing to some form of malnutrition, have not been thriving.

It is amusing to see this Jacobean house, one of the oldest buildings in London, occupied by so many of its newest citizens. Compared to the stereotyped bleakness of the ordinary hospital, the rich dark-panelled rooms make a startlingly picturesque setting, and there is something delightfully incongruous in the shiny-black, elaborately carved oak staircase, and the white-clad, light-footed nurses who flit up and down its solid steps.

For the care of these bad beginners, the delicate babies, there is a staff of fully trained nurses.



QUEEN ELIZABETH AND HER BABY

Taken after the return from Australia





PRINCESS ELIZABETH WAITS FOR HER SHIP TO  
COME IN

## CHILD WELFARE

Enter one of the pleasant wards, and in rows of cots, over each of which is written the Christian name, age, weight (both on admittance and up to date) of its occupant, you will see, in violent contrast one to another, at once both the very finest and the very poorest specimens of babyhood. I do not know which of these two extremes was the greatest revelation to me. That any baby could look either so well as the best or so ill as the worst was equally astonishing.

They were exactly like the "before and after" pictures on the advertisement of some patent medicine, and it was delightfully reassuring to turn from some piteously puny newly-admitted baby to a glorious infant Hercules, who having already reaped the full benefit of the treatment, was now ready to face the world, well provided with firm flesh, clear skin, and calm nerves.

For most of the miserable little specimens brought in for treatment, Spartan parents would have considered the doorstep the only proper place, but at Cromwell House even the very feeblest babies nearly all respond to treatment and become plump and placid.

With wan pride the nurses showed me a little boy who weighed actually only two pounds. I am afraid I shuddered at the sight of my fellow-creature, but they assured me that he was expected to "do very well."

It was a lovely afternoon in late summer and the rows of cots on the balcony, filled with rounded babies twiddling their bare toes while, like melons,

## QUEEN ELIZABETH

they visibly ripened in the sun, were a very pleasing sight.

If you cross the delightful garden with its mulberry trees, you come to the annexe to Cromwell House, the beautiful new building called the Princess Elizabeth Hostel. This was opened by Queen Elizabeth on November 26th, 1931. Soon after the opening ceremony, she returned to Cromwell House to pay it a surprise visit. A clinic, attended by over fifty mothers and their babies, was then being held. The Queen talked to everyone in turn, and as she left the room, she—so I am told—somehow contrived to include every mother in her parting smile, so that each might have voiced the words of the one who said: “Did you notice how the Duchess smiled at *me*? I wonder why she picked me out special?”

What the babies think of their President has not yet been expressed, but no doubt each will be told how specially radiant was the smile it inspired.

To follow Queen Elizabeth from the care of infancy to the care of youth, let us now glance at her as President of the Council of Girls' Clubs.

Briefly stated, the purpose of this organization is “to unite girls' clubs of all denominations and districts and give help wherever needed.”

At Cardiff a thousand factory girls crowded round Queen Elizabeth, and when she left the Town Hall there was a wild rush just to sit in the chair that she had occupied, and cries of: “Oh, isn't she just lovely?”

## A GIRLS' CLUB

The following extract is quoted from a letter from a factory girl :

“I think everyone gasped for joy when the Duchess entered the courtyard in her frock of the new eggshell blue. . . . After we had sung ‘Land of Hope and Glory’ the Duchess left us with a beautiful Remembrance. We all ran out to get a last glimpse of her, and then, with never-to-be-forgotten moments in our hearts, we returned to work.”

One of the most interesting and admirable enterprises with which Queen Elizabeth has been intimately concerned is the St. Marylebone Association, a gallant attack levelled against the standing disgrace of the London slums. The appalling problems presented by the slums have only recently aroused the painful interest long due. For ages they were accepted as a necessary evil, one that seldom disturbed the mind of the comfortably housed. Even so conscientious a sovereign as Queen Victoria remained serenely unperturbed, and wanted to know “why people made such a fuss about the slums.”

And even now, though we realize the national disgrace of the fact that within a mile or so of our own homes vast numbers of our fellow-creatures are living in conditions that none of us would dream of tolerating for our pet animals, the difficulties of clearing the slums are so immense that most of us,

## QUEEN ELIZABETH

however alive to the disgrace, still find the problem too difficult to tackle. Anything one person can hope to achieve seems so little in proportion to all that is required, and most of us are only too ready to take the fact that we cannot do everything as an excuse for doing nothing.

Indolence produces acquiescence in evils that are not inevitable ; circumstances we could at least in some measure relieve. How often is it said of any scheme to improve the conditions of the very poor : " I am sure it is quite hopeless. What could I possibly do ? And what difference can one drop in the ocean make ? "

Of the occupants of the slums one often hears : " They are used to it. You might as well pity me because I do not live in Buckingham Palace."

Fortunately, there are always some human beings who, undismayed by difficulty and undiscouraged by jeers, will straightway set to work to clear the nearest patch, in spite of its relative smallness to the vast area they must leave unredeemed ; a relative smallness to which idle pessimists persistently draw attention.

Actuated by this crusading spirit, in 1927 a few friends founded the St. Marylebone Housing Association, and launched a tireless attack on the hideous squalor of Lissom Grove. In order to carry out their purpose, which was to demolish the existing disgraceful buildings, and to build new and liveable houses, they bought a piece of freehold land, the nightmare centre of which was a Gargantuan

## CLEARING THE SLUMS

rubbish-heap, surrounded by wretched insanitary hovels and decayed shops overrun by rats and beetles.

The over-crowding was appalling. To give one by no means exceptional example, a room eleven feet six inches by seven feet six inches was occupied by a man, his wife, and four children.

At last the preliminary task of the Association was achieved, and on June 9th, 1928, Queen Elizabeth came to lay the foundation stone of the first block of flats. Though the rubbish heap was removed, "Home Sweet Home" must still have seemed a sufficiently ironic composition to the occupants of Lissom Grove—a part of the Kingdom hitherto unvisited by Royalty.

Owing to the density of the population considerable anxiety was felt concerning Queen Elizabeth's safety, and some policemen were overheard saying they were glad they were to be off duty on that particular afternoon. But the crowd proved as considerately courteous as it was wildly excited, and the Queen must have realized that she had extended her conquest over many thousands.

To testify to the delight given by her presence, here are extracts from letters from two women, both of whose homes she visited.

One wrote :

"I must tell you what occurred when Her Grace visited our humble home. It *was* a day of excitement, I can assure you! While we was waiting with our flags ready to cheer on Her Grace's arrival, I was surprised by a knock that come, and when I

## QUEEN ELIZABETH

opens the door there was Her Grace the Duchess of York, and the first words she says was 'May I come in?' And I said, 'Certainly, you was ever so welcome,' and she smiled ever so and the sweet way she spoke made us quite happy, for we knew we had with us the sweetest lady who seemed to understand us and felt at home at once. She wasn't afraid to go over the house and she remarked on the picture of her little daughter, and now I treasures that picture even more—I can almost see the Duchess now in her bage coat and hat and we still say how very pretty she looked. I didn't realize what I had done for the moment but I led her to the window, and when all the crowd outside saw her they cheered themselves hoarse, and I was so delighted and happy that I shouted, 'Ain't she lovely and sweet?' When she left in her car she waved her hand and left us so happy, and we are sure that wherever she goes her presence will always make people glad. God bless her."

The other wrote :

"On the wall was a photo of my son Thomas, killed at the battle of the Somme. Only twenty he was. The Duchess looked at the photo. 'How lovely,' she said. 'He belonged to the Royal Fusiliers, I see,' and then, turning away her pretty head, she whispered, 'God bless him.' There was tears in her eyes, and I felt I could have hugged and kissed her, but I was so overcome, I had to turn away not to break down sobbing . . ."

Three years later the Queen revisited Lissom

## ROYAL ACADEMY OF DRAMATIC ART

Grove to open the delightful new flats of which she had laid the foundation stone. The devoted band of workers responsible must surely have felt their labours well rewarded as they remembered the former hideousness of the place they had converted. The centre of the site, once a desolate chaos of filth, rubbish, and decayed wood, infested with sewer rats and wild-eyed cats, was now a green and pleasant courtyard, through which walked grateful tenants, pathetically house-proud because they had acquired the new privilege of sleeping in a room in which they did not also cook, eat, and wash.

To turn from the grim realities of slums to the solace of art, I am sure that Queen Elizabeth's connection with the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art has been one of her most pleasing duties. It might almost be described as a holiday task. On November 17th, 1931, she came with the Duke of York to open the Academy's beautiful new buildings, and after enjoying the students' performance she was persuaded to deliver a speech from the stage of the theatre, and in so doing proved that she, at least, needed no instruction in elocution. She then made a tour of the premises, and was personally introduced to each of the students.

Shortly after the opening ceremony the Duchess was invited to be Patroness, and her consent assured her continued interest in the Academy.

Mr. Kenneth Barnes, the principal of the Dramatic Academy wrote :

"The Duchess appreciated every turn in the



## QUEEN ELIZABETH

Comedy which was charmingly punctuated by the gaiety of her laughter. After the recitation by Henry Ainlie of a poem especially written for the occasion by the Poet Laureate, she was asked to make a speech. At first she said she never spoke at public ceremonies, but at last she yielded to persuasion and delivered a speech that was a lesson in how such a speech should be made and spoken. Not only was it a lesson to the students in faultless diction, but it also convinced her audience of her genuine and intelligent interest in the drama and her faith in the value of good training. Incidentally she expressed herself delighted to hear of the Academy's untiring efforts to eradicate the so regrettably prevalent false pronunciation of certain vowels, known, perhaps unjustly, as the 'Oxford accent.' The Duchess inspired unanimous affection and admiration in the hearts of the students. Apart from the spell of her charm, they were made to feel that she took a lively interest in their work and could criticize it wisely as well as value it generously.

"The questions she asked showed an unusual capacity not only to observe, but also to form a true estimate of the nature and conditions of the work. On this occasion, as on countless others, she showed that she did not regard her visit as a merely formal ceremony, but as an opportunity for appraising all she saw so that she might form her own opinions.

"On the staff and the students she left the impression that they had been visited not only by

## ROYAL SCHOOL OF ART NEEDLEWORK

a Patroness of whom they were proud, but also by a friend who would not forget them, and since then she has given evidence of her remarkable memory not only for faces but for the impression received of the character behind the face."

Another school of art with which Queen Elizabeth is intimately associated is the Royal School of Art Needlework. This admirable institution was founded in 1872 by H.R.H. Princess Christian with the double object of reviving a languishing art and providing paid employment for educated women who would otherwise have had to live in poverty. The School has been a great success and is now entirely self-supporting. The most exquisite embroidery is produced, and any kind of needlework can be carried out from the faithful copying of mediæval tapestries and the making or repairing of Regimental Banners to the turning out of underclothes and table linen in the very latest fashion. When H.R.H. Princess Christian died the Queen succeeded her as President.

Every year since then she has presided over a stall at the Winter Sale, and buyers in close formation, press and throng to buy something from her hand. Few tasks are more fraying to the temper than selling. To have to stand and look pleasant for hours while you keep your heads about prices, the giving of correct change and the packing of parcels is enough to fluster the most serene, but Queen Elizabeth never once failed to greet each customer as if they were not only the first, but also the last.

## QUEEN ELIZABETH

Queen Elizabeth often visits this school and shows great interest in each worker and her work. To add one more to the chorus of testimony I quote a letter from one of the embroidery teachers :

“ The Duchess of York seems to radiate charm. She has that true simplicity so seldom found after childhood. She will always be loved and willingly served because she has that happy gift of thinking the best of people and so will invariably get it.”

## CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

QUEEN ELIZABETH AS MOTHER—BIRTH OF PRINCESS  
MARGARET ROSE



## CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

**I**N no capacity has Queen Elizabeth better discharged her trustee-ship to the country than in the gentle wisdom with which she has brought up its two little Princesses. This can have been no easy task ; to make Princess Elizabeth aware of her great obligations, and yet keep her unself-conscious, must have needed all a mother's loving vigilance. To the lasting credit of Queen Elizabeth be it said that in this child of many prayers we see qualities not often found together. Exquisite civility never makes her appear unspontaneous ; neither has the necessary discipline in any way checked her natural liveliness. If few grown-up people could be more sensible, certainly no child could be more merry.

Before she was many months old the photograph of Princess Elizabeth was to be seen in every small home throughout the Empire, and legions of little girls had already been named after her. Her distinct little face adorned the Newfoundland stamp, and in the farthest south the Union Jack now waves over Princess Elizabeth Land.

From earliest infancy this golden-haired Princess with the brilliant blue gaze captivated the crowds

## QUEEN ELIZABETH

to whom she held out her arms in delight. She did not delay to show that she had inherited her mother's instinctive courtesy. Long before she could walk she knew how to smile strangers into slavery and, while still unable to speak, gave unmistakable signs of a wish to set others at their ease. In no phase of her life has shyness hampered her social gifts, and now that she has attained the age of ten, the poise and polish of her manners are really remarkable, yet no one could bring the claim of precocious sophistication against her spontaneous politeness or accuse her of being unchildlike. Some people seem to think that good behaviour in a child must denote lack of spirit, but one glance at the radiance and vivacity that ride sparkling in her eyes clears Princess Elizabeth from any suspicion of tameness. Her merry, enterprising face with its ripple of latent mischief proclaims her bubbling and contagious good spirits, and her exquisite civility gives no sense of being imposed by excessive drill. One feels that example has prevailed where precept might well have been in vain.

Stopping over the cot in which her little granddaughter lay, Queen Mary once said : " I wish you were more like your dear little mother." But if Princess Elizabeth does not resemble her mother in appearance, I feel sure she is blessed with many of her qualities. Are not the same serenity, grace, radiance, and dignity already perceptible ? Those who knew Queen Elizabeth in her early childhood tell me the promise of the flower was already dis-

## QUEEN ELIZABETH AS MOTHER

cernible in the bud, and that it was almost as though she had some premonition of her destiny, and were rehearsing for the part she was one day to play, so assiduously did she practise her good manners.

She, before her daughter, proved that naughtiness is not the only outlet to an exceptionally high vitality, for her governess declared her "always lively, but always good."

When I visited Princess Elizabeth just after her fifth birthday, she did the honours of her nursery with the manners of an ambassadress, offering me food with the unpressing politeness of a perfect hostess, and showing herself a good listener as well as a good conversationalist. Unlike most children she never asked a second question before the first had been answered, and whenever she saw that her visitor was trying, however feebly, to be funny, she smiled to reward the effort. But exquisite as was her civility, never for one moment did it give one the impression of having been imposed by excessive drill. Rather one felt that her mother's unfailing example had succeeded where precept might well have been in vain. However heavy the burden of Royalty may be, this little Princess was not allowed to feel its weight during her first happy years. Whatever the formidable possibilities of her child's destiny Queen Elizabeth was determined no shadow from the future should darken the brightness of her life or shorten by one day that which should be the birthright of every child—long years of gay irresponsibility.



## QUEEN ELIZABETH

Thanks to splendid health and spirits and to the love that surrounds her the first ten years of Princess Elizabeth's life have certainly been singularly pleasant.

How wisely, as well as lovingly, she had been brought up, was, I think, well proved when the birth of her sister ended her benevolent autocracy as first-born. The invasions of her precincts was wisely edited to the dowager baby and no single spark of jealousy was shown.

Princess Elizabeth was four years old when her sister was born. From the first Princess Margaret Rose was welcomed by her as an enchanting new possession—a magic doll, surpassing the wildest dreams of Christmas Eve, and to this younger sister, still the most perfect of her playthings, she has always been the most affectionate and protective elder sister imaginable.

Princess Margaret Rose, now a delicious elfin child of six, was born at Glamis. This new Princess was fourth in succession to the throne, and the excitement her first birthday stirred in the quiet village of Glamis can easily be imagined. The Home Secretary, who, according to historical custom, must be present in the house at the birth of any possible heir to the throne, was staying, with special police on duty, at Airlie Castle, eight miles from Glamis.

His visit was unexpectedly protracted, and the long gathering excitement burst into blaze when at last, in the stormy early hours of Thursday, August



## A REUNITED FAMILY

A photograph taken immediately after the return from Australia



OUR KING AND QUEEN  
*(Photograph by Bertram Park)*

## BIRTH OF PRINCESS MARGARET ROSE

21st, his car was seen to dash through the gates of the Castle.

The villagers stood waiting in the pouring rain, and soon the church bells rang out the news that all was well.

The Home Secretary found the new Princess wide awake in her cradle in the Tapestry Room. Having attended her first levée or couchée (there was doubt as to which the ceremony should be called) he despatched a telegram to the Lord Mayor of London, who has the historic right to be the first person outside the Royal Family to be informed of a Royal Birth. He also telegraphed to the Governors-General of the Dominions and Crown Colonies. The doctors in attendance issued the official bulletin : " The Infant Princess is doing fine." The " doing fine " is a Scotch colloquialism and was used to emphasize the fact that the Princess had been born north of the Tweed.

In London the bells of St. Paul's clanged out rejoicings, and the guns of the Tower of London added their thunder in a salute of forty-one guns, the Royal Salute of twenty-one with twenty others on behalf of the Lord Mayor and Corporation.

At Glamis, the home of her mother's happy childhood, the " lassie's bairn," as the villagers called the baby Princess, was greeted by an enormous bonfire. Ablaze on the top of Hunter's Hill, it lit up the larch, spruce, and oak trees, crackling and roaring to the great disturbance of the roe deer. This bonfire had been set alight by four little girls

## QUEEN ELIZABETH

with the same torches that had kindled one lit in celebration of Queen Elizabeth's wedding seven years before.

Queen Elizabeth is one of the women who could have happily made very nearly a whole time job of bringing up and enjoying her children ; and one of her few regrets is that the many other important claims on her time have too often kept her away from her nursery. Nevertheless she made it possible to find time to give Princess Elizabeth all her first lessons herself, and I am assured that reading without tears was achieved. She has always taken the greatest delight in dressing her two pretty daughters, and much loving care has gone to choosing all the petalled frocks of palest pink, primrose yellow and speedwell blue ; delicate attire in which each little Princess looks like one hedge-row flower after another.

One can scarcely imagine any home comfort more delightful than to have the beloved Nannie of your own childhood to bring up your own babies, and this has been the Queen's good fortune. Miss Crawford, a charming young lady, now presides over the lessons of the two little Princesses, and besides her excellent teaching they are, under their mother's supervision, instructed by experts in dancing, drawing, singing, music, and swimming.

## CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

A LONDON HOME—145 PICCADILLY—QUEEN ELIZABETH  
AS HOSTESS—THE HOME OF HER CHILDHOOD



## CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

**B**EFORE their accession to the throne most of King George's and Queen Elizabeth's family life was spent in their London home, 145 Piccadilly. At whatever hour one happened to pass its door one usually saw a group of people standing outside, patiently waiting in the hope of catching a glimpse of one of the three White Roses of York, as the Queen and her daughters were called.

Peeping Toms had no opportunities. The plain net curtains gave an effect of closed eyelids to the house and there was nothing to betray the fact that it was a Royal residence. No sentry barred the way, and anyone who wished could walk up the stone-flagged approach to the house and ring one of the two bells marked "Visitors" and "House."

Those who were admitted found themselves in an unusually welcoming hall, and a few steps across the warm brown carpet, past the pale green pillars, brought you into the cheerful presence of what is known as the "morning room."

The contrast between the two sides of 145 Piccadilly was as wide as possible and seemed symbolic of the difference between the public and private life of its mistress. The front of the house



## QUEEN ELIZABETH

opens on the roar and whirl of Piccadilly, but directly its doors closed behind you, the fever and fret of traffic faded from your ears, and as you entered the large ground-floor room, its quietness came to meet you and enfolded you in a sense of peace. Not a sound could be heard from without, and through the wide windows you looked out on to a soothing vista of unbroken green.

Like other so-called morning rooms this downstairs sitting-room was used at all times of the day ; quietness and spaciousness making it delightful for both solitude and company.

Over the mantelpiece Mr. Edmund Brock's painting of Princess Elizabeth claimed your instant attention. The curtains were a beautiful shade of warm peach ; the Persian carpet gently gay with inwrought animals. Books were not all strictly confined to their shelves, favourites being allowed to lie about. Very likely a piece of embroidery would be in evidence, for Queen Elizabeth keeps up the needlework so well taught her by her mother (I wonder whether she has found time to use the thousand golden-eyed needles given her in a case as a wedding present). A few fine bronzes stood among the mass of exquisitely arranged flowers. The tables were not cluttered up with framed photographs, though just a few very pleasing ones helped to make the room as personal as it was, the most attractive being one of two children, Queen Elizabeth and the inseparable companion of her childhood, David Bowes-Lyon.

I often wonder how much of the personality of a stranger could be gathered from studying her room. From this room at least three clear instances could have been drawn. First the nationality of its inmate. Amongst many other indications there were the china figures of Scotch soldiers on the mantelpiece, and in the book-cases Scotch authors were especially well represented. Secondly, a love of dogs, for conspicuous amongst the selected photographs were the favourite golden Labradors. Thirdly, and most clearly, this was a room the freedom of which had been given to children. An ever hospitable happy hunting-ground, it did not open its doors only for a stated children's hour. Of its frequent invasion there was ample evidence. Behind the largest table was an enchanting treasury of toys, and one could imagine the delight of the glass cabinet with its shelves thronged with minute animals, amongst them a herd of elephants each of them tiny enough to be pushed by a ladybird. Behind the black lacquer screen were the two celebrated scarlet brushes and dust-pans, with which every morning the two little Princesses swept the thick pile carpet. This rite was one of the most enjoyable in their daily routine. Wireless and an immense gramophone stood in perpetual willingness. Altogether far too good a place to have to leave when the knell of bedtime summoned enthralled children.

Queen Elizabeth had grown very fond of this house in which she and her husband had both worked so hard, enjoyed relaxation as only hard

## QUEEN ELIZABETH

workers can, and seen their children pass through so many of the fleeting phases of infancy. In their work in this house they had been splendidly helped by an admirable staff, all of whom had been with them for a very long time. Lady Helen Graham, most devoted, capable, and agreeable of ladies-in-waiting, has known Queen Elizabeth since her earliest infancy. She acted as secretary as well as lady-in-waiting. This it can be imagined was no sinecure, for every single letter the Queen received was scrupulously answered. Assisted by Lady Helen, she always dealt with her correspondence in the early morning. Ever since her engagement was announced she has been snowed under by letters. To mention one of the many categories of correspondence to be dealt with, ten a day was the average number of functions that, as Duchess of York, Queen Elizabeth was asked to attend. Naturally, only a small proportion of these invitations could be accepted, but all had to be carefully considered, and a glance at the engagement books of this period show how large a number of functions she did attend. Besides public ceremonies there were many other claims on her time. For one thing, she is determined to keep in touch with all the friends of her girlhood. Her own family is an especially intimate one, and she wishes to see as much as possible of each member of it; and then her immediate and abiding success with her in-laws made her radiant presence in constant demand at Buckingham Palace. Naturally, she and her husband

## QUEEN ELIZABETH AS HOSTESS

attended every formal Court ceremony, drawing-rooms, banquets, balls, and all other State affairs. Although these occasions were not so very frequent, they constantly dined and lunched quietly at the Palace, and there was a standing invitation of which they frequently availed themselves, to take the children to tea with their devoted grandparents, King George and Queen Mary. They also did a great deal of entertaining themselves. A born hostess, Queen Elizabeth greatly enjoys this rôle, in which she was wonderfully helpful to her husband. Never content with second-hand evidence, the Queen always wishes to discuss with real experts the social schemes with which she is connected. This brought a great variety of interesting guests to 145, all of whom were encouraged to talk shop, and if any of them felt shy their hostess was always very skilful at setting them at their ease. Then, as the King and Queen have so many friends, pleasant informal small dinners frequently took place, after which, perhaps, the party would go to a theatre or a cinema. Like many of us, Queen Elizabeth prefers plays, but more often goes to films. However light-heartedly Queen Elizabeth discharged her various duties, she thoroughly appreciated any leisure that could be secured, and a free evening spent at home was a rare treat gratefully enjoyed. This gave her the coveted opportunity to enjoy the full rites of her children's bedtime, and after a peaceful *tête-à-tête* dinner with her husband, she found it very restful just to sit and read, or listen to

## QUEEN ELIZABETH

the wireless. Daytime leisure was also thankfully accepted. Whenever possible she and King George seized the opportunity of going for a walk together, and both delight in lawn tennis whenever they can get a chance to play.

On wet days Queen Elizabeth sometimes found time to visit the still-room and revive her Scotch skill in the making of scones and cakes—an excellent relaxation; and there were always many books waiting to be read—books that she longed to read.

About three years ago King George and Queen Elizabeth acquired an English country home of their own at Royal Lodge in Windsor Park, where they were able to enjoy real privacy and the delights of intimate family life. Here the Queen found full scope for the tastes and talent for gardening inherited from her mother, and here in this safe retreat from public life and the camera, the little Princesses have spent their happiest hours, revelling in the messy joys of gardening and the blissful possessions of innumerable pets—dogs, fawns, twenty budgerigars, and best of all, the beloved ponies they ride so well.

Hitherto, Queen Elizabeth and King George had frequently spent week-ends with friends, but once they acquired a country home of their own they showed great reluctance to turn away from its sheltered delights.

During the months spent away from home the same visits have been repeated year by year. Every August has been spent at Glamis, and from there the family always went north to share King George V's

## THE HOME OF HER CHILDHOOD

holiday at his beloved Balmoral, and then on to their own small holiday house, Birk Hall. Each Christmas has been spent with fullest possible rites at Sandringham, and no year has passed without a visit to the Hertfordshire home of Queen Elizabeth's parents. Here Queen Elizabeth loves to wander with her children and show them the carpets of anemones and primroses that to her—it seems only yesterday—were so surely the haunt of fairies. For the mother, this wood—the Enchanted Wood—shimmers with memories. In its shade a medley of unforgettable sights and sounds assail her, and as her little daughters excitedly tug at her hands, the intervening years dissolve, and she is drawn back into her own childhood.



## CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE

QUEEN ELIZABETH AT HOLYROOD—QUEEN OF ENGLAND





## CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE

**T**HUS the years passed by, fully occupied with work, entertaining, and the bringing up of children. Since so many family homes stood wide open to receive them as often as they could leave London, very little time was left for going abroad. Except for one official visit to the Paris Exhibition, and their attendance at the Royal wedding in Norway, King George and Queen Elizabeth have not left Great Britain since their return from the Australian tour. The most important, as it was the most picturesque episode in her public career was when, as Duchess of York, she and her husband held Court at Holyrood during his appointment as King's Commissioner to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

From childhood Queen Elizabeth had been steeped in the stormy history of her country, and it was with an almost overpowering sense of romance that she entered the sombre Palace that had staged so much of its picturesque history.

From the evening when there was a shout of "They've come!" until her departure ten days later, she remained under the spell of this romance. Thick and heavy with glamour, the atmosphere

## QUEEN ELIZABETH

enwrapped her like a heavy cloak. Like some hauntingly sad and lovely tune that will not be dismissed, the thoughts of Mary, Queen of Scots, kept drifting into her heart and mind, and when she woke for the first time to her unbelievably glamorous surroundings, it was to wonder into which century she had been wafted by her dreams.

During the last two years there have been many Royal Family events involving pageants ; and on some occasions—notably the marriages of their uncles, the Duke of Kent and the Duke of Gloucester and the Silver Jubilee—the two little princesses have been allowed to grace processions. Smiling and waving from their carriage to the cheering crowd, they clearly delighted in all the tumult and the shouting.

The death of their much loved grandfather, King George the Fifth, brought the first sorrow into their lives. Less than a year later followed the bewildering news of the abdication of their uncle, King Edward VIII, and now in a few months these two little girls, who, wherever they pass, leave a glow of gladness behind them, will drive through acclaiming crowds to see their parents crowned as King and Queen.



A RECENT PICTURE OF THE KING AND QUEEN AND PRINCESS ELIZABETH  
IN THE CHARMING GROUNDS OF ROYAL LODGE, WINDSOR

*(Photograph by Fox Photos. World copyright reserved)*



QUEEN ELIZABETH AND HER FAMILY

*(Photograph by Marcus Adams)*

## QUEEN OF ENGLAND

A solemn destiny now claims this happy family, but however onerous her new duties we need have no fear that Queen Elizabeth will ever fail to preside over every detail of the little princesses' lives. She will still remain the guardian angel of their childhood. And, however arduous the task of the new King, we may feel confident that the gentleness and strong personality of his Consort will always provide that soothing quietude so necessary to the tired and harassed. Whatever the exertions of his great office, his natural taste for simplicity and family life will not be wholly starved, for in spite of its immense size and vast staff, Buckingham Palace will remain as genuine a home as any cottage in the country. Assured that he will devote his life to the welfare of his country, we whole-heartedly wish our new King long enjoyment of his happy home.

And Queen Elizabeth herself? She who has so truly earned the honourable title of helpmeet. It has been said that those who bring happiness into the lives of others cannot keep it from themselves. Is not one glance at our new Queen's radiant face enough to show us that she is still reaping her reward?



# INDEX





## INDEX

### A

Academy of Dramatic Art,  
Royal, 199  
Addington, Mr. (Lord Sid-  
mouth), 159  
Africa, *see* East African Tour  
Airlie, Lady, 124  
Albert, Lake, 169  
Alexander, King of Serbia, 160  
Alexandra, Queen, 152  
Althorp, 122  
Amelia, Princess, 158  
Annaly, Lord, 122  
Annaly, Lady, 165  
Arbroath cricket match, 75  
Argyll, Duke of, 159  
Art Needlework, Royal School  
of, 201  
Ascot, 123  
Athi Plains, Kenya, 166  
Australian tour, 177

### B

Balfour, Lady Nina, 43  
Balmoral, 160  
Barnes, Mr. Kenneth, 199  
Baron's Court, Ireland, 161  
"Benjamins, the", 47, 71  
Birk Hall, 219

Blue Nile Dam, 170  
"Bobs", the pony, 32, 48, 72  
Bowes-Lyon, Cecilia, 150  
Bowes-Lyon, David, 29, 32, 43,  
47, 49, 50, 51, 52  
"second sight", 55  
"grey people", 56  
school holidays, 60  
cricket, 76  
entertaining wounded, 89  
Eton, 123  
Bowes-Lyon, Fergus, 82  
killed at Loos, 83, 104  
Bowes-Lyon, John, 82  
Bowes-Lyon, Mary :  
marriage of, 71  
birthday party, 76  
Bowes-Lyon, Michael, 53, 55,  
82  
wounded prisoner, 83  
return of, 115  
Bowes-Lyon, Patrick, 82  
Bowes-Lyon, Rose :  
marriage of, 71  
training as nurse, 82  
efficient "sister", 87  
home from Malta, 124  
Brooke, Capt. B. V., 165  
Bruton Street, London, 123,  
176  
Buist, Lieut.-Commander, 165  
Bull, Mr., Clerk of Faculty  
Office, 149  
Bute, Lord, 158

# INDEX

## C

Cambridge, Lady Mary, 150  
 Cambridge, Lady May, 150  
 Canberra, 176  
 Canterbury, Archbishop of, 152  
 Capponi Villa, 70  
 Caroline, Queen, 158  
 Cator, Miss Betty, 150  
 Cavendish-Bentinck, Miss Cecilia, 21  
 Chesterfield House, London, 161  
 Christening of Prince of Serbia, 160  
 Church of Scotland, General Assembly of, 223  
 Clandeboye, 161  
 "Cloisters," the, 55  
 Collingwood, the, 144  
 Cortacy, 124  
 Coryndon, Sir Robert, 165  
 Council of Girls' Clubs, the, 194  
 Craithie, Minister of, 49  
 Cromwell House, 192  
 Cromwell, Oliver, 24  
 Curzon House, London, 176

## D

Darbyshire, Mr., on Australian tour, 177  
 Dean, River, 110  
 Deans, Jeanie, 158  
 D'Egville, Madame, 61  
 Dundee Fire Brigade at Glamis, 130

## E

East African Tour, 165  
 on the *Mulbera*, 165  
 Mombasa, 165  
 at Government House, 166  
 at Nairobi, 166  
 at Embu, 166  
 journey to Meru, 166  
 Duchess practises shooting, 166  
 camping on *safari*, 167  
 camp life time-table, 168  
 return to Nairobi, 168  
 departure for Uganda, 168  
 visit to Rangai, 168  
 cross Victoria Nyanza, 168  
 at Jinja, 168  
 Ripon Falls, 168  
 Entebbe Government House, 169  
 at Kampala, 169  
 visit King of Uganda, 169  
 at Fort Portal, 169  
 Semliki Valley, 169  
 Lake Albert, 169  
 on the *Samuel Baker*, 169  
 at Nimule, 169  
 on steamer *Nasir*, 169  
 adventures on shore, 170  
 landing at Tonga, 170  
 parade of Nubians, 170  
 sports at Kodok, 170  
 visit governor of Kosti, 170  
 the Makwar Dam, 170  
 reception at Khartoum, 171  
 sandstorm in Suez Canal, 171  
 reached London, April, 1925, 171  
 Duchess a good shot, 171  
 London Rufifrous Gazelle, 171

# INDEX

- Edward IV, 140  
 Edward VIII, 224  
 Elizabeth, Princess :  
   birth of, 176  
   with grandparents, 186  
   greeting return of parents,  
     187  
   early infancy, 205  
 Elizabeth, Queen :  
   birth, 21  
   early life, 35  
   early social activities, 41  
   literary effort, 44  
   "Two Benjamins," 47  
   Mrs. Thompson, 47  
   dancing lessons, 48  
   Minister of Glamis, 49  
   Mr. Stirton's recollections,  
     51  
   Drury Lane Pantomime, 52  
   the "Cloisters," 55  
   day school in London, 59  
   French governess, 59  
   German governess, 60  
   Passed Junior Oxford Exam-  
     ination, 61  
   Madame D'Egville's dancing  
     classes, 61  
   Madame Verne, music mis-  
     tress, 61  
   first meeting with future  
     husband, 70  
   at Villa Capponi, 70  
   marriage of Lord Glamis,  
     71  
   marriage of Lady Mary, 71  
   possessor of pets, 72  
   Lord Gorell's remembrance,  
     73  
   house parties at Glamis, 75  
   cricket, 75  
   Lady Mary's birthday, 76  
   fourteenth birthday, 81  
   declaration of War, 81  
   four brothers join the Army,  
     82  
   making comforts for troops,  
     82  
   first Christmas at Glamis, 83  
   Glamis as hospital, 87  
   fire at Glamis, 109  
   closing the hospital, 115  
   Forfarshire Girl Guides, 122  
   President Wilson's drive, 122  
   Marshal Foch's ovation, 122  
   bridesmaid to Lady Lavinia  
     Spencer at Althorp, 122  
   Ascot, 123  
   Forfar Ball at Glamis, 124  
   family party, St. Paul's  
     Waldenbury, 124  
   bridesmaid to Princess Mary,  
     124  
   visit to Paris, 124  
   Embassy Ball, 124  
   appreciation of friends, 129-  
     133  
   engagement, 137-138  
   betrothal announced, 138  
   consent of King George V  
     declared, 138-139  
   welcome at Sandringham,  
     141  
   preparations for the wedding,  
     149  
   marriage licence, 149  
   bridesmaids, 150  
   wedding dress, 150  
   wedding scenes, 151  
   honeymoon, 157  
   visit to Serbia, 160  
   in Northern Ireland, 161  
   East African tour, 165  
   birth of Princess Elizabeth,  
     176  
   mission to Australia, 176

# INDEX

Australian tour, 177  
 return of the *Renown*, 185  
 reunion of mother and daughter, 187  
 opens Princess Elizabeth hostel, 194  
 visit to Cardiff, 194  
 lays foundation stone of flats, 197  
 visit to Lissom Grove, 198  
 opens the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, 199  
 Royal School of Art Needlework activities, 201  
 birth of Princess Margaret Rose, 208  
 rejoicings at birth of princess, 209  
 London home, Piccadilly, 213  
 social and State activities, 216  
 skill as cook, 218  
 Court at Holyrood, 223  
 Royal Family events, 224  
 Elphinstone, Elizabeth, 150  
 Elphinstone, Lord, marriage of, 71  
 Embu, 166  
 "Enchanted Wood," the, at St. Paul's Waldenbury, 31, 138  
 Entebbe, 168

## F

Faculty Office, 149  
 Farquhar, Lord, 157  
 Fife, Duke of, 140  
 Foch, Marshal, in London, 122

Forfar Ball at Glamis, 124  
 Forfarshire Girl Guides, 122  
 Frogmore, honeymoon at, 157

## G

George V, 138, 140, 142, 152  
 death, 224  
 George VI:  
 first meeting with Queen Elizabeth, 70  
 first visit to Glamis, 124  
 at St. Paul's Waldenbury, 126  
 engagement announced, 138  
 President of Industrial Welfare Society, 142  
 camp at New Romney, 142  
 sportsman, 143  
 naval cadet, 144  
 midshipman in the *Collingwood*, 144  
 in the battle of Jutland, 144  
 mentioned in dispatches, 144  
 Group Capt., Royal Air Force, 144  
 wedding in the Abbey, 153  
 honeymoon, 157  
 at White Lodge, 157  
 journey to Serbia, 160  
 at Chesterfield House, London, 161  
 visit to Northern Ireland, 161  
 East African tour, 165  
 return to London, 171  
 at Glamis and Balmoral, 176  
 Bruton Street, 176

# INDEX

- birth of Princess Elizabeth,  
176  
Australian Mission, 176  
Government House ball, 181  
return to London, 185  
visit to Royal Academy of  
Dramatic Art, 199  
Court at Holyrood, 223  
Glamis Castle :  
history and description, 22-  
26  
converted into hospital, 82  
fire, 109  
hospital closed, 115  
Forfarshire Girl Guides, 122  
Forfar ball, 124  
first visit of George VI,  
124  
honeymoon at, 157  
Glamis, Lord, marriage of,  
71  
Gloucester, Duke of, 224  
Gorell, Lord, a remembrance,  
73
- H
- Hamilton, Lady Catherine, 150  
" Hangman's Chamber ",  
Glamis Castle, 25  
Hardinge, Miss Diamond, 124,  
125, 150  
Highgate, 192  
Holyrood, Court at, 223  
Hyde, Anne, 139
- I
- Industrial Welfare Society,  
142
- J
- Jean, Princess, 22  
Jellicoe, Lord, 144  
Jinja, 168  
Jutland, battle of, 144
- K
- Kampala, 169  
Kent, Duke of, 224  
Kenya, Governor of, 165  
Khartoum, 171  
Knight, Clara Cooper, 38  
Kodok, 170  
Kosti, 170
- L
- Lang, Mrs. Andrew, 41  
Leeds, Duke of, 71  
Leicester, Lady, 70  
Lessons, 82  
Leveson-Gower, Lady Rose,  
53, 82, 87, 124  
Leveson-Gower, Mr., 71  
Loos, 83, 104  
Lorne, Marquess of, 140  
Louise, Princess, 140
- M
- MacClean, Clara, 38  
Makwar dam, 170  
Malcolm, King, 23  
Margaret Rose, Princess, birth,  
208

# INDEX

Marie, Queen of Serbia, 160  
 Marylebone Association, 195  
 Melbourne, Government  
     House Ball, 180  
 Meru, 166  
 Mombasa, 165  
 Mothercraft Training Society,  
     192  
 Mountains of the Moon, 169  
*Mulbera*, the, 165  
 Murray, Anna, first Lady  
     Glamis, 22

## N

Nairobi, 166, 168  
*Nasir*, steamer, 169  
 Neal, Mr., dancing master,  
     48  
 Nelson, Lord, 159  
 New Romney, 143  
 Nimule, 169  
 Northern Ireland, 161  
     Baron's court, 161  
 Nubian parade, 170

## O

Osborne, Lady Dorothy, 71

## P

Paris Embassy Ball, 124  
 Patrick, first Earl of Glamis,  
     22  
     diary of, 49  
 Peter, Prince of Serbia, 161  
 Piccadilly, No. 145, 213

Polesdon Lacey, 157  
 Pony, "Bobs," 32, 48, 72  
 Portal, Fort, 169  
 Portland, Duke of, 21  
 "Priest's Hole," Glamis  
     Castle, 24  
*Princes and Princesses*, 41  
 Princess Elizabeth Hostel, 194  
 Princess Royal, 140

## R

Ralston, Mr., 42  
 Rangai, 168  
*Renown*, the, 185  
 Ripon Falls, 168  
 River Dean, 110  
 Robert II, King, 22  
 Royal Air Force, 144  
 Royal Family marriage regula-  
     tions, 139-140  
 Rufifrous gazelle, 171

## S

*Safari*, 167  
 St. James's Square House, 123  
 St. Paul's Waldenbury, 21  
     "Home," 29  
     the nursery, 30  
     the garden, 31  
     the wood, 31, 138  
     hay-making, 32  
     Sundays at, 123  
     Christmas party, 124  
     children's party, 132  
     King's visit, 138  
     proposal in the *Wood*, 138  
     engagement, 138

## INDEX

*Samuel Baker*, the, 169  
 Sandringham, welcome at, 141  
 Scotland, Church of, General  
     Assembly, 223  
 Scott, Lord and Lady Francis,  
     168  
 Scott, Sir Walter, bed at  
     Glamis, 25  
     *Heart of Midlothian*, 158  
 Scott, Mrs. (Lady Strath-  
     more's mother), 70  
 Semliki Valley, 169  
 Serbia, visit to, 160  
 Sidmouth, Lord, and Nelson,  
     159  
 Siola, 167  
 Slums, 195-196  
 Spencer, Lady Lavinia, 122  
 Stirton, Mr., minister, 49  
     recollections, 51  
 Strathmore, Earl of, 21, 84,  
     153, 180  
     St. James's Place, London,  
         67  
 Strathmore, Lady, 21, 25, 26,  
     36, 44, 49, 59, 70, 77, 87,  
     99, 100, 101, 104, 118  
     an invalid, 126  
     operation on, 126  
     parties at Glamis, 129  
 Streatlam Castle, 29  
 Sudan rufifrous gazelle, 171  
 Suez Canal, 171

### T

Thompson, Mrs. (house-  
     keeper), 47  
 Thynne, Lady Mary, 150

Tonga, 170  
 Trousseau, the, 150

### U

Uganda, 168

### V

Verne, Madame Matilde, 61,  
     63  
 Victoria Nyanza, 168  
 Victoria, Queen, 140, 195  
 Villa Capponi, 70

### W

Wales, Prince of, 143, 158  
 War, declaration of, 81  
 Wedding, the, 149-153  
 Westminster Abbey, 152-153  
 White Lodge, 157, 158, 160  
 White Nile, 160-161  
 Wilson, President, in London,  
     122  
 Windsor, Royal Family name,  
     140  
 Windsor, Royal Lodge, 218

### Y

York, Archbishop of, 153





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